هكذا من الأصل

Chechen Warlord Rejects Maskhadov Call to Lay Down Arms

MOSCOW — Chechen warlord Salman Raduyev warned Saturday he would not obey an order by President Aslan Maskhadov to dissolve his armed faction, which numbers some 1,000 men, Interfax news agency said.

Raduyev said he had "no intention of taking off his military uniform and dissolving his army as long as Russia has not recognized the independence" of the breakaway Republic of Chechnya.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



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Israeli Army Kills Lebanese Civilian

TYRE, Lebanon — Israeli troops killed an elderly Lebanese civilian when they shelled a village in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon, UN peacekeepers said Saturday.

An Israeli tank fired a shell in the direction of Aadchit Village in the occupied zone, killing a farmer in his 70s, Ahmad Sueidane, an officer with the UN interim force in South Lebanon said.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Seminar on Cooperation With Africa to Open

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The "Third Seminar on Africa: Practical Ways of Cooperation and Development," will start work here tomorrow, said Deputy Foreign Minister for Education and Research Abbas Maleki.

Speaking at a press conference, Maleki underlined that the participants at the seminar will discuss several economic, cultural and political issues as well as practical ways of upgrading ties with African countries.

He reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran is eager to broaden relations with developing and under-developed countries particularly those located in the African continent.

The deputy foreign minister added that several domestic researchers, university professors, and government officials would take part in the two-day seminar.

He also noted that the seminar would host eight researchers and experts of African affairs from Spain, Germany, France and the United States, adding that some 12 articles on Africa would be presented during the seminar.

Maleki said that Irano-African relations in industrial and commercial fields, establishment of bilateral relations with African countries on the basis of mutual interests and commonalties, exports and imports of goods, will be the main agenda during the seminar.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

$90 Million German Loan to Renovate Suroush Oil Fields

TEHRAN — A German bank is to place a loan of $90 million at the disposal of Iran to develop and renovate the Suroush oil field.

According to press, on Saturday the German Bank 'Westdeutsche Landesbank', (West L.B.) will grant the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company a loan of $90 million to expand and renovate the offshore oil field of Suroush.

The expansion and renovation of the Suroush oil field was one of the 12 major oil and gas projects for which international tender was floated in Aban 1374 (October 23-November 21, 1995) and at the beginning of the current Iranian year 1376 (March 21, 1997).

The production manager of offshore regions of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in an interview with the press added that the tender for the Suroush oil field had been awarded to the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company.

The expenses involved in implementing the project is about $200 million and it is predicted that it will take between 36 to 39 months to complete the project.

In the first phase to expand the oil field, it is assessed that 60,000 barrels of heavy crude will be extracted per day.

A petroleum expert said that according to the contract signed between the Iranian and German sides, the repayment of the loan will be through the sales of crude oil.

The Suroush oil field was one of the offshore fields which was severely damaged in the Iraqi-imposed war of 1980-1988.

Meanwhile, Iran received a loan of $36 million for the construction of a workshop near Tehran to renovate railway carriages, said the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), based in the western Saudi city of Jeddah. *(IRNA)*

Yilmaz Wins Confidence Vote



ANKARA — Turkey's Parliament erupted in a brawl Saturday as deputies passed a vote of confidence in Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, bringing the final curtain down on the country's first Islamist government.

Yilmaz, who heads a conservative secular coalition, easily won the vote in a session live on television that had to be interrupted as

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Plavsic Holds First Meeting With Hardline Rivals

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Beleaguered Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic met her leading hardline rival, Momcilo Krajisnik, here Saturday for the first time since a power struggle erupted last month.

The meeting, on a key day in the Serb Orthodox calendar, took place at a religious ceremony. Afterwards, the two went to the Serb presidency building for what were expected to be difficult talks.

They were accompanied by Dragan Kalinic, speaker of the Bosnian Serb Parliament, and Aleksa Buha, first vice-president of the ruling Serb Democratic Party.

None of them made any comment as they went into the building to begin their meeting.

Krajisnik, the Serb member of Bosnia's three-member presidency, is closely linked to the indicted war criminal and former Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, and has been leading the fight against Plavsic in the power struggle which broke out into the open at the end of last month.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



AL-KHALIL (July 11): Members of the international observer force "TIPH" in the West Bank city of Al-Khalil monitor the daily clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli soldiers. The 140-strong multi-national force have very few legal powers, but believe their presence in the flashpoint city helps to dampen the conflict. *(AFP PHOTO)*

Bomb Thrown at Israeli Army in Al-Khalil

AL-KHALIL, West Bank — A bomb was thrown at Israeli soldiers in the flashpoint West Bank town of Al-Khalil overnight without causing casualties, military sources said Saturday.

The soldiers were standing guard outside a Jewish enclave in the heart of the town when unknown attackers threw the explosives, the sources said.

Troops searched the area and found a second bomb which they defused.

The Zionist Army also prevented Palestinian shopkeepers in two Al-Khalil streets near the Jew-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Orangemen Sweat It Out on Streets of Belfast

BELFAST — Sweating in their elaborate uniforms, hundreds of bandsmen pounded out a deafening blast of drum and flute music as Northern Ireland's protestant Orange Order marched through Belfast on Saturday.

The Orangemen cancelled contentious parades through Catholic areas where violence had been feared but they made up for it on their own turf as band after marching band poured through the center of the northern Ireland capital.

The "Loyal Orange Lodges" (branches) marched behind their ceremonial banners bearing images symbolic of their deep protestant faith and loyalty to the British crown.

The pounding drums bore the names of the Lodges, redolent of long devotion to the union with Britain. The forefathers of the rising sons of the Somme Lodge were among thousands of Ulstermen who perished in the World War I battle in France.

Behind the bands came the more senior lodge members, solemn looking men in black bowler hats — long out of fashion in mainland Britain — with Orange sashes round their necks and elaborate armlets on their sleeves.

They carried the ceremonial swords and pikes of their order, while others bore the crown and the Bible on velvet cushions.

Younger members looked more dishevelled, with their formal orange sashes worn incongruously over casual shirts not tucked into their jeans.

As an estimated 80,000 Orangemen were on the march across Northern Ireland, thousands of families lined the parade routes from early in the morning, determined to have a good day out. *(Reuter)*



Mugabe, Forouzesh Discuss Tehran-Harare Cooperation

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Minister of Construction Jihad, Gholamreza Forouzesh, of Iran and Zimbawean President Robert Gabriel Mugabe discussed avenues for expansion of Tehran-Harare cooperation.

Mugabe referred to the positive role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in filling the gap which had been created in his country, due to the negative conduct of the Western states particularly the Britain, after the independence of Zimbabwe and expressed pleasure over the enhancement of cooperation between his country and Iran.

Forouzesh, who is currently in Harare at the invitation of Zimbawean Minister of Industry and

(Contd on Pg. 14)



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In the Name of God

Say: Tell me what Allah has sent down for you of sustenance, then you make (a part) of it unlawful and (a part) lawful. Say: has Allah commanded you, or do you forge a lie against Allah.

(HOLY QORAN) (10:59)

OPINION

NATO Enlargement, Threat to Russia, to the World

The other day United States President Bill Clinton stood in a square in Warsaw and announced the formal decision of NATO foreign ministers to accept Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as full-fledged members of the alliance.

The ecstatic Poles were simply besides themselves, for they recognize a military alliance when they see one, and so do the former Red Army generals who still remember the stupendous price they paid to defend their land against aggressors who swept down the same Polish corridor twice in this century to obliterate Russia from the world map.

No Russian leader in his right mind can let the very alliance whose very existence is aimed at Russia to deploy forces within a stone's throw of Russian borders and not utter a word.

The Russians have been made to accept some lukewarm promise of a veto over any nuclear deployment over the border in Poland. It does not take a genius to grasp that in this age nuclear weapons, especifically short-range missiles and artillery, are virtually obsolete, specially when faced with a power armed with the same weapons, such as Russia. So essentially we are back to the status quo ante World War II when Western powers wanted to make a grab for Russia, or at least destroy the socialist system that governed the former Soviet Union.

So the question arises, what will happen, say a decade from now, when the Western powers have trained and equipped half a dozen countries of the former Warsaw Pact and some dispute arises between Americans and Russians? Will the dilapidated Russian army be blackmailed into subservience in a showdown and defeated without as much as a bullet fired?

As it stands today, the capitalist West is content with devouring Russia from within, emptying out the soul of Russia and throwing away the carcass. But there are some in Russia who understand well what the plan is and these might be the ones to resist the onslaught. Today, no NATO forces can enter Russia without traversing a few hundred miles, or no NATO maneuvers can be held at Russia's doors, concealing some threat or an actual invasion, but come tomorrow and all this will change.

This is also well understood by the ultra-rightist Senator Jesse Helms, Chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee who said that before ratifying the pact, his concerns must first be taken into consideration—chief among them, whether its terms will spur the rightwingers into action in Russia, awakening the giant.

A zealot and a rightwinger himself, he can not believe the Russian generals will stand for it. Too much is at stake and with stakes so high and the threat so close to Russia he can not believe the good fortunes of the United States and the West, so he is worried about pricking the bear.

It is said that countries do not have friends, only interests. It is not in the interests of Russia and world peace to let the former enemies, and today's perceived friends to camp so close to the door. They might decide to come in without knocking.

Heart Disease, Main Cause of Death in Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Conducted researches indicate that heart disease is the main cause of death in Iran, the Deputy Health Minister for Research Affairs said here Saturday.

Talking to IRNA, Ms. Ashrafusadat Sanei stated that the research dubbed as "healthy heart" also focused on level of public awareness about this fatal disease.

Dr. Sanei cited high cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, lack of exercise, excess weight, stress and unchecked diabetes as the leading causes of heart diseases in Iran.

Pointing to the high cost of treating heart diseases, she stated that prevention through educating the public is the recourse adopted by the health officials in addressing this health issue.

Velayati: Talks With Malian Officials Constructive

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, speaking at a press conference in Bamako, capital city of Mali, on Friday said that his talks with ranking Malian officials have been constructive.

The Malian President Alpha Oumar Konare called for greater Tehran-Bamako cooperation. He also welcomed the invitation extended by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran inviting him to attend the 8th summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to be held in Tehran in December.

According to IRNA, Velayati in his talks with Oumar Konare and Malian Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and Foreign Minister Djonkouma Traore called for cooperation among Islamic countries at international level.



The foreign minister said Tehran-Bamako ties can serve as an example for other countries.

Asked about the apostate author Salman Rushdie, Velayati said the attitude towards Rushdie is not just limited to Iran, rather this is the general attitude of the world of Islam which has been endorsed unanimously at various OIC meetings.

On the U.S. black list of countries supporting terrorism, Velayati said if the list is to be realistic, Israel must be on top of the list.

The Zionist regime has killed leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and accepted the responsibility for the crime. It has admitted kidnapping several Lebanese citizens. Tel Aviv has also gunned down worshipers at Al-Khalil Mosque while praying, overall Israel has fallen short of no terrorist act, he told reporters.

The foreign minister stressed that what U.S. claims is a political move and has nothing to do with respecting human values. From U.S. point of view countries who accept Washington's policies are observing human rights and those opposing are terrorists.

Elsewhere in the press conference the foreign minister predicted positive and promising prospects for Iran's relations with Persian Gulf states.

Two separate messages have been sent to Tehran recently by King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah, both dealing with participation of Prince Abdullah in the Tehran OIC summit.

Malian foreign minister also told reporters at the press conference that Iran's investment and partnership in agricultural, transportation, tourism and road building sectors are among fields of Tehran-Bamako cooperation.

The Malian Embassy in Tehran is to be inaugurated shortly.

In another development the same day, Velayati met the Malian heads of Islamic parties and associations as well as instructors and students of the theological centers.

Velayati is on an African tour to invite heads of Islamic states to attend the OIC summit in Tehran.

Zoroastrians Association Condemns Zionists' Insult to Islam

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — In a statement issued here Saturday, Tehran's Association of Zoroastrians denounced the Zionists' sacrilegious act insulting the Holy Prophet Mohammad (S).

The statement read that the Zoroastrian Association of Tehran, paying tribute to the sanctities of divine religions and their followers, deeply deplores any act of sacrilege to the holy prophets.

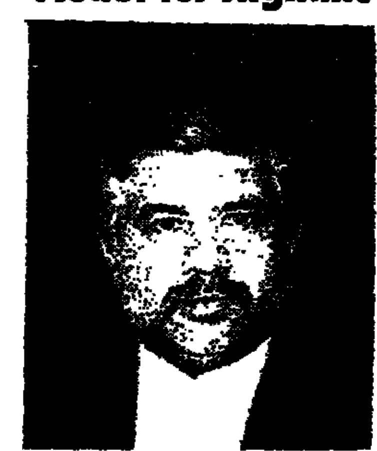
"Hereby, we announce that any insult to the sanctities of any religion will be condemned by the association," it added.

According to another report, Sunni ulema in southern towns of Khorasan Province in a statement here on Saturday condemned the Zionist regime's insult to Prophet Mohammad (S).

The statement said the sacreligious act committed by the Zionist agents was in line with the plots being hatched by the U.S. against the Muslim world including its imposition of economic sanctions on Iran, the Mykonos trial and recognition of the Holy Qods as the capital of the usurper regime of Israel with an aim of stirring sectarian and tribal discords and undermining world Muslims.

The statement quoted Sunni ulema in Torbat-e Jam, Taibad and Khavaf, as condemning the Zionists' insult to the Jesus Christ (AS) and Holy Mary (SA), and saying that those who insulted the Prophet Mohammad (S) should be executed.

Iran's Envoy: Tajik Peace Process a Model for Afghans



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to Tashkent, Mohsen Pakaeen expressed hope that the constructive peace process in Tajikistan would serve as a lesson for Afghan warring sides, an IRNA report said.

Speaking to Tajik correspondents, he said that the Islamic Republic of Iran by adopting an active diplomacy based on maintaining its relationship with the government and former opposition groups persuaded both parties to negotiate and reach a compromise.

He said Iran believes that by establishing tranquility in Tajikistan and availability of many natural resources, the country can be changed into a developed country in the region. He added that Iran has started its plan on reconstruction of Tajikistan.

30 More Villages to Become Towns

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Deputy Interior Minister for Construction Affairs Rasoul Zargar said in Ahar, East Azarbaijan Province, on Friday that some 30 big villages will be turned into towns by the year-end (March 20, 1997),

President of Suriname Invited to Tehran OIC Summit

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — A message of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was handed to his Surinamese counterpart, inviting him to attend the 8th summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) due to be held in Tehran in December.

According to IRNA, the message was submitted by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmoud Vaezi in Paramaribo on Thursday.

Surinamese president welcomed the invitation and said that his country would be represented in the summit at the highest level.

In another meeting Surinamese speaker and Vaezi explored ways of strengthening Tehran-Paramaribo parliamentary cooperation.

Surinamese speaker underlined the need for expansion of bilateral cooperation at international forums notably at interparliamentary meetings.

Iranian Diplomat Submits Credentials to Ecuadorean President

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to Bogota and Accredited Ambassador to Ecuador Hossein Sheikh Zeinoddin submitted his credentials to Ecuadorean President Fabian Alarcon Rivera on Friday, IRNA reported.

Rivera voiced his country's willingness to expand relations with Iran and expressed hope that more serious steps would be taken for consolidation and strengthening of Tehran-Quito relations following assignment of Ecuadorean accredited ambassador in Tehran.

Sheikh Zeinoddin for his part underlined existence of good potentials both in Iran and Ecuador for expansion of bilateral economic and political relations and said that Iran is ready to broaden its cooperation with the country.

Extraordinary, Plenipotentiary Ambassador to N. Korea Named

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Mohammad Ganji Doust was appointed as the new extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador of Iran to North Korea.

The appointment was proposed by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and approved by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Ganji Doust has served as Iran's ambassador to Bangladesh and Turkey and was Iran's charge d'affaires to Pakistan.

Ganji Doust's last position was the head of Foreign Ministry's Second Department for Southeast Asian Affairs.

Kazakh Official Calls For Expansion of Cooperation With Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President of Kazakhstan's Senate Omar Beik Baygaldi called for further promotion of Tehran-Almaty "good and growing" relations in all areas.

According to IRNA, the Kazakh official made the remark in a meeting with an Iranian delegation in Almaty Friday.

Baygaldi said history and culture shared by Kazakhstan and Iran should pave the ground for further expansion of bilateral relations, especially in the economic sphere.

He observed that the international Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway enjoyed more capacity than its current transfer volume which could be utilized for increasing trade transactions among regional states after removal of present obstacles.

He also called for formation of a legal regime for the Caspian Sea as soon as possible.

Calling Iran's recent presidential-elections completely free and sound, the Kazakh parliamentarian congratulated the president-elect Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Khatami on his election to the post.

Meanwhile, Majlis Deputy Hashemi who is heading the three-member Iranian parliamentary delegation to Kazakhstan, said that Iranian and Kazakh nations' commonalties could serve as a suitable ground for expansion of mutual cooperation.

Hashemi also submitted an invitation from Iranian Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri to his Kazakh counterpart to visit Iran.

He said that Iran is ready and keen on expanding cooperation with Kazakhstan, especially in the field of economy.

He termed as positive the cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan at regional and international levels.

IHRC Urges International Bodies to Probe Violation of Human Rights in Azerbaijan's Prisons

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), in a statement faxed to the *Tehran Times* yesterday, called on the international human rights bodies to investigate the appalling condition of the prisons in the Republic of Azerbaijan and take immediate measures to improve it.

The statement added that the prisons in Azerbaijan are in a very poor hygienic condition and, as a result, most of the prisoners are suffering from infectious diseases like tuberculosis, some of them even having lost their lives during the past few days. The statement named Aziz Javidi and Mahmoud Sheikholeslami as among those who have recently died in Azerbaijan's prisons due to inhuman acts and lack of medical care.

"The reports received from Azerbaijan indicate that, due to the worsening economic situation in that country, blackmail and bribery have become prevalent among the policemen and judicial officials in that country and many prisoners have been detained due to corruption in the judicial system and baseless accusations," the fax further read.

The statement also quoted the IHRC Public Relations Office as saying that the complaints received from Azerbaijan about the deplorable condition of its prisons have been conveyed to the Azeri government officials but they have made no response yet.

That is why the IHRC urges all international human rights organizations to make every effort to improve the existing condition and prevent the flagrant violation of human rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan and save the lives of a large number of people imprisoned there, it concluded.

Polish Floods Hit Major Historic City Wroclaw

WARSAW - A surge of high water raging north along the Odra River from flooded southern Poland swamped suburbs of Wroclaw on Saturday and menaced the historic city centre.

A local government spokesman said authorities were deciding to blow breaches in flood walls south of the city to free some water into the countryside and save the centre from the horror endured by some 50 Polish towns and 300 villages.

The floods caused by heavy rains throughout much of this week have taken at least 26 lives, police said.

Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated, leaving eerily deserted villages.

"A decision is being taken to breach barriers to divert water eastward into the Widawa valley...to prevent a thorough flooding of the city," spokesman Ludwik Ryng told Reuters.

The choice was tough after anguished local villagers on Friday drove engineers away and dug out explosives from flood barriers to prevent their homes and farms being sacrificed.

In communities just upstream of Wroclaw, water poured over defences and quickly reached the first storey of buildings, sending residents to upper floors or rooftops to await rescue.

Reuter photographer Pawel Kopczynski, on the scene, said waters in central Wroclaw almost touched the bridges and teams of workers were frantically laying sandbags to protect the low-lying Tumski Island with its valuable old buildings.

Precious books and archives were being hastily removed from a university library there, amid intermittent rain.

In the suburban community of Korzanow the fast, filthy waters lapped at the base of 10-storey apartment blocs.

"The water took only half an hour to sweep in and now in places it is one or even two metres deep," Kopczynski said.

The city of Opole, further south, on Friday gave a terrifying foretaste of the fate that could await the 650,000 people of Wroclaw, when the waters coursed right into the centre and people took refuge in high-rise buildings.

Many citizens and nearby villagers had disregarded warnings to leave their homes in advance, for fear of looters or from a desire to stay with everything they held dear. Some had to be coaxed by rescuers into boats after the floods arrived.

"Above all, the old people are terrified climbing into the precarious little boats," Kopczynski said from Wroclaw, which until 1945 was the German city of Breslau.

By Friday 3,500 sq km (2,170 sq miles) of Poland lay under water owing to the floods, which have also ravaged swathes of the Czech Republic.

But even as waters receded in southern areas the surge advanced mercilessly along the Odra and the Wisla — causing the capital Warsaw to declare a flood alert.

Although official forecasts said the tide was unlikely to spill over when it hit Warsaw early on Monday, riverside districts were taking no chances and the zoo by the Wisla was making emergency preparations to safeguard its animals.

Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz said on Friday his government was considering borrowing abroad to help victims and was in talks with the world bank on a loan.

(Reuter)

REFUTATION

Managing director of the group of Homa Hotels refuted the news item entitled "Iran Sells Off Former Sheraton Hotel" on page 3 of the *Tehran Times* dated July 6. In a fax to the *Tehran Times*, the managing director said the aforementioned hotels belonged to Homa in pre-revolution period and had not been handed over to the company through confiscation, adding that the Homa Hotel still functions as part of the group of Homa Hotels.

WEATHER

The Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization announced today's weather as follows:

Forecast for Tehran: Max. temp. 37°C
Min. temp. 26°C

Partly cloudy with wind and scattered showers

Warmest Point:
Nikshahr 47°C

Coldest Point:
Saqaz 10°C

Some cities of the world

Cities	Max. °C	Cities	Max. °C
Riyadh	41	Vienna	21
Istanbul	28	Moscow	17
Rome	—	Madrid	—
Athens	31	Abu Dhabi	38
London	22	Karachi	33
Paris	23	New Delhi	31
Frankfurt	28	Kuwait	45

Tour Buses Plunge Into Yangtze

BEIJING — Two overloaded buses transporting visitors to Scenic Emei Mountain plunged into rivers in separate accidents on the same day, killing a total of 43 people, an official report said Saturday.

Both accidents occurred Monday. In the first, 33 people died when their bus ran into the Yangtze River near the industrial city of Chongqing, the newspaper *Yangchen evening news* reported.

The bus was carrying 64 people, far exceeding its full capacity of 45, said the report published Friday and seen in Beijing on Saturday.

Of the remaining 31 passengers, 28 were rescued and another three were still missing. The report did not give a reason for the crash.

In the second accident, near the city of Jianyang, a bus carrying 30 people rammed into a freight truck while crossing a bridge. The bus flipped over and rolled into a gorge, killing 10 and leaving 18 injured, the report said.

(AP)

Attack on Iran's Cultural House in Pakistan to Be Investigated Next Week

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Pakistani sources announced that Pakistani police has completed the file relating to the terrorist attack on Iran's cultural house in Multan Pakistan and that investigation into the file will start next with at a court combating terrorism.

Armed terrorists stormed the cultural house of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Multan on Feb 20, 1997 and shot and martyred the head of the cultural house and its six Pakistani staff.

English daily *Muslim* published in Pakistan wrote that Pakistani police has arrested six suspects by the names of Abd al-Manan, Hafez Mohammad Aslam, Mohammad Afzal, Gholam Mojtaba, Eftekhat Ahmad Baharya, and Shafigh al-Rahman.

The police commander of the city of Bekr has said that Shafigh al-Rahman and Abd al-Manan are the two main suspects accused of attacking the cultural house of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Multan.

Rebels Release Hijacked North Korean Ship's Crew

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — Tamil separatists on Saturday handed over to the Red Cross the 37 captives they had held for five days after hijacking a cargo ship off Sri Lanka's northeastern coast, officials said.

International Committee of the Red Cross spokesman Christopher Martin confirmed that the crew "Moran Bong" were released to their officials.

"We are expecting the crew to be in Colombo later tonight," Martin said in a telephone interview. He said the crossing over from rebel territory to government lines was posing a few technical problems.

The rebels handed over the crew to the Red Cross office in Mallavi, a Tiger-controlled region in the Vanni District, 240 kilometers (150 miles) from the capital Colombo.

On Wednesday, the body of the ship's fourth officer, 54-year-old Sin Gwng Ho, was handed over by the guerrillas to Red Cross representatives. Sin was shot dead when rebels fired machine guns at the vessel before boarding it.

(AP)

Unsaid Facts About President Rafsanjani's Pre-Revolution Struggles

Tehran Times Service



TEHRAN — Head of the "Office for Spread of Islamic Sciences" Eng. Mohsen Hashemi said the book entitled "Hashemi Rafsanjani, Years of Struggle" has been compiled to speak of the unspoken events in pre-revolution struggles and of an historical document.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, Hashemi said the book contains the memories and SAVAK's (the defunct Shah's notorious secret police) documents in relation to President Rafsanjani indexed by pictures of the president and his fellow activists along with a chronological index of the events of the revolution.

Mohsen Hashemi, son of President Hashemi Rafsanjani, added that all the documents classified by SAVAK in relation to president Rafsanjani has been inserted in the book without any alteration in the contents.

He said that the book will soon appear on the newsstands and that excerpts of the book will also come out for the English-speaking readers.

President to Inaugurate NICIC Projects in Kerman

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will inaugurate a number of National Iranian Copper Industries Company's (NICIC) projects during his forthcoming visit to Kerman Province.

The president will open the new copper production line of Kerman Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex which will annually produce 14,000 tons of cathode copper plates with 99.99 percent purity.

The gas supply project to Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex will also be inaugurated by the president. Natural gas from Bandar Abbas Sarkhoun 2 gas fields will be transferred to the complex to replace 300,000 tons of liquid fuels which is already being used annually by the complex.

Meanwhile President Hashemi Rafsanjani will pick the ground for extension projects of Sharcheshmeh Copper Complex. Once operative the National Iranian Copper Industries will be able to increase the country's copper production to 260,000 tons annually. The present figure is already 100,000 tons.

Tajik Minister Inaugurates Iran's Shop

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - An Iranian permanent store was inaugurated in Dushanbe on Saturday by the Tajik Minister for Foreign Economic Relations.

The Tajik minister said at the inaugural ceremony that the opening of the shop in the capital city Dushanbe would provide a new area of cooperation between the two countries, IRNA reported.

He underlined the need for expansion of Tehran-Dushanbe economic cooperation and called for Iran's investment in the republic.

He said that based on an agreement reached between Iran and Tajikistan, Iranian companies would participate in oil and gas exploratory activities in southern Tajikistan.

The newly inaugurated store offers foodstuff, garments, sanitary products, construction materials, stationaries and books for sale. it has been set up by construction Jihad Ministry in the third floor of Tajik central store building.

Bank Indonesia Widens Currency Intervention Band

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Bank Indonesia (BI), the country's central bank, on Friday expanded its currency intervention band to enable the country to have a more free floating currency.

Djakaria, head of BI Foreign Exchange Division, said the decision was taken independent of the situation in the Philippines, an IRNA- ANTARA dispatch reported.

"We did it now because we felt it was important for us to take a pre-emptive move and to give the rupiah more room to fluctuate," he said.

He added the move allows the rupiah to float before the central bank intervenes from 8.0 percent to 12 percent.

The band has been expanded to between RP.2,374 and RP.2,678 to the dollar from the previous rate of between RP.2,430 and RP.2,612.

The intervention rate was last widened on September 11, 1996, from 5.0 percent to 8.0 percent.

Foreign exchange dealer Frederick of ABN-Amro Bank was quoted by ANTARA's AFEX research as saying that the move could allow the rupiah to slip further before the central bank intervenes.

"Widening the intervention rate to 304 rupiah should give some psychological comfort as the country will have a more free floating currency," he added.

He said it should also help curb speculations by foreign traders.

Another foreign exchange dealer at ABN-Amro Bank, Hoare Govett, said that the move had been expected.

"It was sort of expected but it still took me by surprise. It is just a preparation to further strengthen the economy," he said.

Iran, Bangladesh to Finalize Investment Agreement

TEHRAN — A high level Bangladesh delegation headed by M. Akhtar Ali, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industries is visiting Tehran. The delegation arrived here on Thursday and is expected to return to Dhaka Tuesday.

During their stay in Tehran the delegation will negotiate and finalize an agreement on reciprocal promotion and protection of investments between the. People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The first round of negotiations on this subject was held in Dhaka in October 1995 during the state visit of President Hashemi Rafsanjani to Bangladesh.

It is expected that during the second round of talks the agreements will be finalized.

Akhtar Ali is also expected to meet Iranian high officials in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Industries and discuss ways and means of expanding mutually beneficial cooperation in various industrial, financial and commercial sectors.

Kazakhstan Calls On Iranians to Make Further Investments

Tehrna Times Service

TEHRAN - Kazakh Minister of Industry in a meeting with a visiting Iranian parliamentary delegation in Almaty on Friday called on Iranian entrepreneurs to make further investment in Kazakhstan.

Kazakh minister said that his country is willing to expand its cooperation with Iran and welcomed Iranians' investment there, IRNA said.

Furthermore, he said that his country was keen on utilizing Iran's expertise in the field of food industries and was ready to offer special facilities to Iranian investors.

The Iranian delegation, comprising Majlis deputies of Mianeh (East Azarbaijan) Hashemi, Roudsar (Gilan) Rahbari Amlashi and Torbatjam (Khorasan) Hosseini, welcomed the proposal for expansion of cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan in various fields, especially in the scientific, technical and industrial areas.

An expert delegations is also to visit Iran in near future to get acquainted with Iranian food industries and the quality of their activites.

The Iranian delegation had left Tehran for Almaty on Thursday for a week-long official stay.

Tehran, Beirut to Sign Economic Agreement

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - A high ranking Lebanese economic and commercial delegation headed by Lebanese Minister of Economy and Trade Yasin Jabir and Minister of State for Financial Affairs Fuad Siniora arrived in Tehran yesterday.

The Lebanese ministers are to meet with Iranian officials to explore ways of expanding Tehran-Beirut economic ties and to sign two economic agreements on joint ventures and exemption from customs duties, IRNA reported.

Before leaving Beirut, Fuad Siniora described the trip as a step towards expansion of all-out relations between the two countries and a prelude to the forthcoming visit to Tehran of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Emphasizing further consolidation of political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries, he added that the delegation's visit to Tehran was in line with the Lebanese government's desire to broaden her relations with the friendly and brotherly countries.

He said that Iran has expressed willingness to participate in reconstruction and economic projects in Lebanon.

Malaysian Manufacturing Sector to Remain Attractive

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Malaysian manufacturing sector will continue to provide fund managers with countless attractive investment opportunities, despite facing constraints due to the continuing high growth for nine years in a row.

Ministry of International Trade and Industry's Parliamentary Secretary, Hishammuddin Hussein told fund managers in Kuala Lumpur yesterday that the continued expansion and the increasing specialization and sophistication of the Malaysian manufacturing sector, will provide the opportunities for investments, an IRNA-Bernama dispatch reported.

The sector currently contributed 33.1 percent of the nation's gross domestic products (GDP) and by 2005, this share would have increased to 38.4 percent of the GDP, reflecting the continuing importance of the manufacturing sector to the Malaysian economy, he said at an international fund managers' conference.

However, he added: "We are keenly aware that the next wave of economic growth will come from the services sector and that a great deal of this will be inter-linked with the manufacturing sector in terms of supporting services."

He continued, "to my mind, the most exciting development will be the multimedia super corridor. In this case, we will be catapulting ourselves several rungs up the value-added ladder. This is a quantum leap that very few developing nations can envision."

However, Hishammuddin admitted that after nine years of economic growth exceeding eight percent, the country now faced a critical shortage of labor, both skilled and unskilled which eroded significantly the country's cost competitiveness and its comparative advantage in labor-intensive industries.

To alleviate this problem and offset rising wages, Malaysia must shift towards a high degree of mechanization and automation, but the country's technological absorptive capacity is indaquate, he said.

Other contraints include the need to raise RM.250 billion ($1=RM.2.50) investment from 1996 to 2005, the over-stretched infrastructure facilities and threats of Malaysia losing attractiveness for foreign investors to new economies like Vietnam, China and India.

He said to counter these threats and alleviate the constraints, the government has taken many approaches, including focusing on science and technical studies in education and the aggressive move to spur the growth of the capital markets.

"We in Malaysia do possess the political will to push for the continued improvement of the manufacturing sector, both in qualitative and quantitative terms," he said.

The Fabric of Society

By F.T. Khoie

"Women hold up half of the sky "(Chinese proverb)

It is dawn. She completed her prayers, and has just made her fifth trip to the well to fetch water. With this the house is cleaned, clothes, dishes and children washed, and breakfast prepared.

.She harvests rice and vegetables, some for consumption and the rest to be sold in the nearby market.

Life is a perpetual struggle for the women living in the villages of IRAN. What keeps her going is the desire for a brighter tomorrow for her loved ones. In a world where family roles constantly adjust to meet social and economic realities, her role as a working mother deserves full recognition and reward.

The concept of putting a monetary value on women's casual and unpaid labor evolved 21 years ago at the first world conference on women in Mexico city. This was not an easy task, as data on women's contribution was either grossly inadequate or unavailable in most developing economies.

Who is going to quantify the Toomans that Shereen could have earned in a Karaj shoe factory, or Qazvin bicycle manufacturing plant, if she did not have five children and aged parents to look after? Shereen looks after her husband, her children and her aged parents in the village of Bijar Bene, of Gilan state. Sometimes she wonders how much she would earn as a housemaid rather than a housewife.

A 1996 United Nations report entitled Workers in an Integrating World called on world governments to consider the unpaid but vital contributions women make to the economy and society. Women represent 40 percent of the world's economically active population, and their unpaid contribution to the world's wealth is estimated by the UN's 1996 Human Development Report at US$14,000 billion. Altogether, they account for 70 per cent of the world's annual global output. According to the said 1996 report, both sexes work roughly the same hours, but the men seem to be doing the earning. This is because time spent on domestic duties like child-bearing, child care, cleaning and cooking do not generate income. These activities are not taken into account when determining a nation's gross domestic product (GDP), its total output of goods and services. If household work were included in the national income figures, the world's national product would be boosted by 20 to 30 percent.

In 1995 the Chinese women accounted for 47 percent, Indian women for 37 percent, the Russian women for 54 percent of GDP, when non-marketable activities were included. A country's GDP forms the basis of most policies that effect social services like education, transport, health and housing, and, if it is inadequate (as it usually is with these vital statistics omitted), services will suffer.

Women are not served adequately when the important contribution they make to the GDP of their nation is overlooked. The UN report echoes what we have known for years : women work as hard as men but get paid half the wages. According to the Human Development Report, women tend to work 5 percent more diligently than men in Japan, and in the United States 35 percent more. The existing gap between the men and women where opportunities and wages are concerned reveal that most governments have not been able to implement policies that can bridge this gap on a more permanent basis. Even in the most advanced societies such as Sweden, Switzerland, and Austria women are not treated or paid as well as men.

Change is coming, slowly but surely. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) helps agencies that run programs supporting needy women in the developing world. Its priority areas are credit, science and technology and food security, trade and industry and policy-making. In Co-operation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNIFEM has provided infrastructure and training for silkworm production in India. It has also set up jute-processing plants, to be managed and owned by hundreds of women in Ghana and Cameroon in Africa. Projects run by the International Labor Organization (ILO) aim to minimize poverty by boosting productivity and income, improving women's access to major resources and influencing local policy makers.

The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (one of the D8 members) is famous for lending to women and has lifted many from a hand-to-mouth existence to entrepreneurship. In Latin America and the Caribbean, millions of women profit from their product or skills in the informal economy with the help of the Inter American Development Bank's micro-enterprise programs.

Many women are treated like unpaid servants as they grow up and miss out opportunities for education and better jobs. To minimize this tragedy, plans for women's primary and secondary

(Contd on Pg. 14)

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SPORTS SUMMARY

CRICKET

Sri Lanka Loses its Coach

COLOMBO - World Cup champions Sri Lanka will be without their coach, former Australian test player Bruce Yardley, when they open their campaign in the four-nation Asia Cup on Monday, cricket officials said on Saturday.

The board of control for cricket in Sri Lanka said in a statement that Yardley would leave for Australia on Tuesday for an overdue medical check-up.

TENNIS

Steven Shocks Woodforde

NEWPORT, Rhode Island - Eighth seed Brett Steven of New Zealand recorded the first "double bagel" on the ATP tour this year, crushing second seed Mark Woodforde of Australia 6-0 6-0 on Friday to reach the semifinals of the $255,000 Hall of Fame Tennis Championships.

The 28-year-old steven, ranked 90th in the world, needed just 54 minutes to dispose of Woodforde and earn the first whitewashing since Greg Rusedski swept past Carston Arriens last year in Sydney.

Fernandez to Play Sugiyama

BROOKLINE, Massachusetts - Mary Joe Fernandez meets Sugiyama in a rematch of a spirited Wimbledon encounter a year ago to launch the U.S.-Japan Fed Cup qualifying playoff on Saturday at Longwood Cricket Club.

"I won it but it was a real tough match," said the 13th-ranked Fernandez, recalling her difficult three-set match with Sugiyama in the fourth round of the 1996 Wimbledon championships.

BASEBALL

Mets Win

ATLANTA - Matt franco supplied more torrid pinch-hitting with a two-run double that highlighted a four-run, eighth-inning rally and lifted the New York Mets to their fifth straight win, 9-7 over the Atlanta Braves on Friday.

Fred McGriff gave the Braves a 6-5 lead in the 7th with a leadoff homer. But the Mets, who rallied from a four-run deficit in Thursday's series opener, answered in the 8th against Atlanta starter Tom Glavine (9-5) with a Bernard Gilkey double, Todd Pratt Walk, Manny Alexander single and, off reliever Brad Clontz, Franco's double to right.

Cipollini Quits Tour, Uzbek Cyclist Dope Test Positive

MARENNES, France — Italy's Mario Cipollini pulled out of the Tour de France shortly after starting the 7th stage here on Saturday.

The Italian, who wore the leader's yellow jersey for four days, pulled up after 25 km.

On Friday Cipollini was involved in a pile-up, cutting his right knee and injuring his hand, which was sprayed by a team medico.

The Italian, who won two stages earlier in the week, had not been a happy rider after having a blazing row with his team manager Antonio Salutini on Thursday night about the lack of support he received on Thursday, when he lost his yellow jersey to Frenchman Cedric Vasseur.

In another development, Uzbek cyclist Djamolidine Abdujaparov said he was astonished at the positive dope test returned after Monday's second stage of the Tour de France which resulted in him being thrown out of the race.

The 33-year-old Abdujaparov, three times a winner of the points winners Green Jersey, said his team masseur had given him something to improve his breathing after he had complained about a chest problem on Sunday.

"I fell on Sunday and after that I found it difficult to breathe. Later I explained to my masseur that I had a bad back. He massaged me and then on Monday he gave me something to ease my breathing," Abdujaparov said.

Abdujaparov, known as the 'Tashkent Express', said he trusted his masseur implicitly as he had looked after for him for years but was not aware of the name of the banned substance.

"I don't know the (Lotto) team doctor very well but I have absolute faith in my masseur and he is aware of what products are banned and which are not," he said.

The Uzbek, who has won nine stages in eight Tours de France, added that he had never ever tested positive before in his professional career and would await what penalty the UCI, cycling's governing body, handed out. (AFP)



MARENNES, France (July 11): A few riders of the Tour de France lay on the ground after falling during the sixth stage of the French cycling race between Le Blanc and Marennes. (AFP PHOTO)

Nevada Toughens Law in Response to Tyson's Ear-Biting



Compiled From Dispatches

CARSON CITY, Nevada — Nevada Governor Bob Miller on Friday signed a law inspired by the Mike Tyson ear-biting incident that allows the state to fine boxers up to 100 percent of their purse for unsportsmanlike conduct.

The new law comes too late to apply to Tyson, the former world heavyweight champion who was disqualified for biting Evander Holyfield's ears in their June 28 world title fight in Las Vegas.

The five-member Nevada state athletic commission this week revoked Tyson's license to fight in the state for at least a year and fined him 10% of his $30 million purse, the maximum allowed under the old state law.

It allows the commission to impose fines of up to 100% of his purse on a boxer who takes part in a sham contest, who "terminates the contest or exhibition in a manner that is not based upon honest competition," or who "is guilty of an act or conduct that is detrimental to a contest or exhibition of unarmed combat."

Another high-profile fight takes place in the state on Saturday when World Boxing Council heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis takes on fellow Briton Henry Akinwande at stateline, Nevada.

Meanwhile, with Mike Tyson banished indefinitely, boxing's backers are looking for a unified world heavyweight title to boost the sport's image.

Lennox Lewis takes what he hopes is the first step toward becoming that champion on Saturday when he defends his World Boxing Council version of the crown against fellow Briton Henry Akinwande.

Lewis to Face Akinwande





LAKE TAHOE (July 11): WBC Heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis (L) of Britain holds up his fist as he poses with challenger Henry Akiwande (R) of Britain after their weighing-in July 11. Lewis will defend his title against Akiwande at Caesars, Lake Tahoe. (AFP PHOTO)

LAKE TAHOE, Nevada — World Boxing Council champion Lennox Lewis weighed in at 242 pounds here Friday for his defense Saturday against top-ranked challenger Henry Akinwande.

Lewis' 242-pound (110 kg) weight was significantly lower than the 251 he weighed in February when he won the vacant WBC title against Oliver McCall.

That contest was stopped in the fifth round when McCall refused to defend himself.

Akinwande, who gave up the lightly regarded world boxing organization title to gain top contender status with the WBC, weighed 237.5 pounds (108 kg). (AFP)

Agassi Returns With U.S. Open in Mind

WASHINGTON — Former world number one Andre Agassi returns to the ATP tour here next week with serious questions to answer about his tennis future after three months off with an injured wrist.

The slumping American won the Washington Classic in 1990, 1991 and 1995, when he and Pete Sampras dueled for dominance. Now Agassi has slid to 30th in the world while Sampras is the unchallenged king of men's tennis.

"I can only hope when I get back to that point Pete hasn't won 25 grand slam titles and retired," Agassi said.

Agassi has called this slump to low point of his career, losing his first match in four consecutive events, the longest winless streak of his career.

Agassi has lost six of his past seven ATP matches and won only $44,915. Wrist pain kept him from Wimbledon and the French Open. He also missed the Australian Open.

"I don't really know what's going on with him but he definitely is missed by the whole of tennis," Sampras said at Wimbledon. "it really hurts the game."

As a result, Agassi has much to prove to himself and skeptical tennis watchers even though he has been training at full strength for only a week.

"This tournament has a different purpose for me than it ever has," Agassi said. "it is more meaningful than it has ever been."

Agassi is seeded third here behind defending champion Michael Chang and Australia's Pat Rafter in this first U.S. hardcourt tuneup event for the us open, which begins August 25.

Petr Korda is seeded fourth, followed in order by Malivai Washington, Jason Stoltenberg, Chris Woodruff and Lionel Roux. (AFP)

Yeltsin Back on the Tennis Courts

MOSCOW — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, holidaying in the picturesque far northern Karelia region, is back on the tennis courts for the first time since undergoing heart surgery last November.

Yeltsin, 66, put in about 10 minutes of active racket work on friday, itar-tass quoted presidential spokesman yuri yarov as saying Saturday.

Already as soon as he arrived on Monday the Russian leader could not resist hitting balls at his holiday home's brand new covered tennis court. But he didn't really play until Friday. (AFP)

UN Missile Inspectors Start Iraq Mission

BAGHDAD — United Nations ballistic missile experts arrived in Baghdad on Saturday to try to ascertain if Iraq still possesses rockets banned under the cease-fire terms of the 1991 Persian Gulf war, a UN official said.

Jo Lomas, special assistant to the director of the Baghdad ongoing monitoring and verification center, said the eight- member team would have a meeting with the head of Iraq National Monitoring Department (IND) Hussan Amin later on Saturday.

She said the team was the third to arrive since last month's standoff when Baghdad prevented UN arms inspectors from entering three sensitive Iraqi sites.

She said a UN germ warfare team was currently in Iraq inspecting Iraqi biological sites and another chemical team ended its mission to Iraq ten days ago with "no major incident."

Last month's standoff on inspection rights prompted the UN. Security Council to warn Iraq it would face further sanctions if it obstructed UN inspectors.

Sanctions were applied after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which led to the Persian Gulf war.

Checking for banned missiles is among unresolved issues between Iraq and the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with disarming it under the cease-fire terms.

UNSCOM has not yet announced the results of its analysis of about 100 Iraqi missile engines it had sent to laboratories in the United States and France.

During his last month's visit to Iraq UNSCOM's deputy chairman Charles Duelfer said the initial results would be made public in August.

Under the cease-fire terms Iraq is not allowed to keep or produce missiles with ranges greater than 150 km (90 miles) and the means to produce them. UNSCOM has said it still cannot ascertain that Baghdad does not have any such missiles.

(Reuter)

Turkish Troops Kill Seven Kurds

ANKARA — Turkish troops killed seven separatist Kurds in fighting in an eastern province bordering Armenia, the Anatolia news agency said Saturday.

The clash between the troops and Kurds from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) took place on Friday in a rugged area near Kars, the province's governor Huseyin Atak told the agency.

He made no mention of losses among the troops.

More that 25,000 people have been killed in PKK-related violence in eastern and southeastern Turkey since 1984 when the separatists launched their armed campaign for a Kurdish homeland.

(IRNA)

India's Missile Program Going Strong

NEW DELHI — Indian Defense Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav said Saturday plans for a long-range missile were on and that a surface missile slammed by the United States will not be scrapped.

The United News of India Saturday quoted Yadav as saying India had not shelved a project to build the ballistic missile "Agni" (fire), which has a range of 2,500 kilometers (1,500 miles) and can carry a one-ton nuclear warhead.

The Agni has been launched three times since February 1994 on an experimental basis.

The defense minister also said the surface to surface Prithvi (earth), with a range of 250 kilometers (150 miles), would not be scrapped despite protests from Washington that it could fuel an arms race in South Asia.

"If the Prithvi missile has been developed, it is not meant for keeping in a showcase in a museum. But we will take our own decision on the timing and location of deployment when the time comes, depending on our threat perception."

He slammed U.S. media reports that India had deployed the Prithvi on its border with Pakistan, saying they were baseless. He added it was "nobody's business to dictate to us when we should deploy the missile and where.

"There will be no compromise on India's security and the country will not be cowed down," he said, referring to reports that Pakistan had test-fired a medium-range missile capable of reaching New Delhi

"The country must remain strong as only the weak will be prone to aggressive designs. Any aggression will be met with a befitting reply."

Pakistan has also expressed concern about the Agni and has urged India to freeze the missile projects, saying the step would reduce tensions between the two South Asian rivals who have fought three wars since 1947. (AFP)

Kiftaro Calls For Boycott of U.S. Products

DAMASCUS, Syria — Syria's chief Islamic scholar has urged Arabs and Muslims to boycott American and Israeli goods.

"Arab and Muslim nations are facing the most violent and aggressive campaign represented by Israel and the American regime which supports it," Sheik Ahmad Kiftaro said during the Muslim prayers on Friday at Abu an-Nour Mosque in Damascus.

Kiftaro said Arabs and Muslims should refuse to buy their products and stop putting money in banks in countries that support Israel and "help the aggression against Muslim nations."

Kiftaro is the ranking religious leader in Syria, whose peace talks with Israel broke off last year.

(AP)

(Contd From Pg. 4)

THE FABRIC...

education, costing about $6 billion are earmarked for the next 14 years. Access to family planning and increased financial services for women are just two of the steps on the way towards economic emancipation.

The horizon is bright. The Beijing conference made the world sit up and take notice of women's labor of love. Women pay a cost in terms of lost opportunities and income to "Hold up half the sky" for their loved ones. It is time for them to be rewarded.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

CHECHEN...

He said he remained loyal to Maskhadov but that he had the right to defend political views different from those of the Chechen leadership.

Chechen fighters defeated Russian forces in a devastating 20-month war that ended last year. The republic considers itself independent though its status has not been formally acknowledged by Moscow.

Raduyev was responsible in January 1996 for a bloody hostage-taking in neighboring dagestan. He later refused to lay down arms despite a Russian-Chechen peace accord signed in August 1996.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

ISRAEL...

The officer gave no reason for the Israeli shelling, though an Israeli soldier was injured Thursday in an attack by Hezbollah activists.

In Israel, a military spokesman confirmed the killing and said it happened by accident when Israeli soldiers spotted "suspicious movements" in the security zone.

"The incident happened when our forces opened fire against suspicious movements in an area of the security zone generally used by hostile armed elements," the spokesman said from Tel Aviv.

"Our soldiers scrupulously respect their security orders and we regret the death of this innocent," he said.

Eight Lebanese civilians have been killed in the south of the country since the start of the year.

This is despite a cease-fire accord between Israel and the Hezbollah last year under which both sides agreed to spare each other's civilians.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

YILMAZ...

scores of deputies from the ruling and opposition parties fought in the chamber.

The chaos erupted shortly after the debate started when a left-wing deputy unveiled a banner insulting Islamist former Premier Necmettin Erbakan.

Parliament speaker Mustafa Kalemli briefly interrupted the sitting, later ordering several deputies out of the chamber. After a break of more than 10 minutes, the session resumed and the confidence debate continued.

Yilmaz, the leader of the conservative Motherland Party, won by 280 votes to 256. The remainder of the deputies in the 548-seat Parliament abstained or failed to vote, Kalemli said.

Earlier, a former close aide of conservative True Path Party leader Tansu Ciller, Erbakan's coalition partner, defected to the Yilmaz camp.

Yaman Toruner, a former Central Bank governor, became the 40th deputy to quit her party since the December 1995 general elections.

He said in a written statement that he would support the Yilmaz government in the confidence vote and would later join Motherland.

The new Cabinet, approved on June 30 by President Suleyman Demirel, brings together members of Motherland and those of the democratic left party and the centrist democratic Turkey party.

Yilmaz has drawn up an ambitious program aimed at strengthening Turkey's secular and democratic foundations and cleaning up the state apparatus.

The military's four-month campaign to secure the resignation last month of Erbakan, the first Islamist prime minister since the founding of the secular republic in 1923, had paralyzed the country and sparked widespread fears of a coup.

The initial trickle of deputies leaving True Path, protesting the alliance with Erbakan's Welfare Party, became a flood as the military campaign hotted up.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

PLAVSIC...

Karadzic still wields enormous influence behind the scenes in the so-called Republika Srpska, the Serb-run half of Bosnia, although he is not supposed to hold public office or wield influence under the terms of the Dayton peace accords.

Plavsic, who is herself no moderate, has accused the clique of hardliners associated with Karadzic of ruining the Bosnian Serbs through organized corruption and profiteering.

A vicious war of words has since followed. Earlier this month she announced the dissolution of the Bosnian Serb Parliament. This was backed by the international community but rejected Thursday by the hardline-backed Bosnian Serb constitutional court.

The situation has been complicated by a NATO snatch operation against two Serb war crimes suspects Thursday, in which one was killed, angering the Serbs. International figures then stepped up backing for Plavsic as the elected figure.

On Saturday, Krajisnik was cited by the Bosnian Serb News Agency SRNA as saying that "We will probably arrive at a compromise" at the Banja Luka meeting.

"No one has the right to be capricious when the Serb people and state are in question," he said, adding that he hoped a solution would be found.

Krajisnik said he hoped that "the celebration today of the festival of the Patron Saint (Saint Peter) of the Serb Democratic Party in Banja Luka will mark the end of the constitutional crisis in the country."

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

BOMB...

ish enclave to open on Saturday.

The shopkeepers protested in vain to the military authorities.

Al-Khalil has been hit by four weeks of on-off clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian protestors amid the stalemate in the peace process. Some 240 Palestinians and 18 soldiers have been injured.

The violence flared up again this week after a four-day lull caused by a massive Israeli security clampdown, and 15 protestors were wounded in pitched street battles on Friday.

Under the terms of a January agreement, the Palestinians took control of 80 percent of Al-Khalil but left the remaining 20 percent, where 400 militant Jewish settlers live, under the Israeli Army's control.

A total of 10,000 of the city's 120,000 Arab population live in the Israeli-controlled area, where the army has forced Arab shopkeepers to remain closed in recent days.

General Uzi Dayan, commander of Israel's central region, visited the scene of the disturbances Friday and warned the Palestinian population that he would "make their life very difficult" if the protests continued.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

SEMINAR...

As for problems in the way of transportation of goods to Africa, Maleki said the newly founded High Council of Africa, headed by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, aims at removing the existing obstacles in this regard.

He said that recognizing the potentials of the African countries is of prior importance, adding that market of Iranian goods in Africa is very brisk and that the exhibitions thus far held by the Islamic Republic of Iran in African countries were warmly welcomed by the African people.

Asked to comment on recent developments in Turkey, Maleki said that Iran strongly condemns incursion of Turkish troops into northern Iraq.

He said that Turkey is Iran s friendly neighbor and that Iran is desirous to have good relations with that country.

Asked about the reduction of Tehran-Ankara diplomatic ties, Maleki said that although the ties have apparently been lowered to charge d'affaires level, the two sides' ties in the political domain have considerably increased.

He said that any decision on further expansion of mutual relations depended on the Turkish Parliament's decision to give a vote of confidence to the new Turkish government. He expressed hope that bilateral relations would further expand after the turkish government come to office.

On Syria-Iraq relations, Maleki expressed satisfactions over reopening of borders between the two countries, saying that Iran has so far received suggestions from the Middle East region to politically and economicly cooperate with Syria and Iraq.

He said that the suggestions are under study by Iranian officials.

Elaborating on Iran-Saudi Arabia relations, Maleki said that remarkable progresses have been thus far made in this connection and that gradually all the existing problems in the way of the two countries' relations would be removed.

On Iran's foreign policy towards Iraq, Maleki said that the Islamic Republic of Iran respects the territorial integrity of Iraq and opposes disintegration of that country.

He also underlined that Iran respects UN resolutions and the decisions made by the UN Special Embargo Committee on Iraq.

As for Iran's future relations with other countries, Maleki said that the March 23 presidential election in Iran has created a new atmosphere for it from international point of view which should be utilized by Foreign Ministry in future.

To make better use of the new atmosphere, Maleki told Iranian and foreign reporters, the Foreign Ministry should be fully in concert wih the president-elect in the next cabinet.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

MUGABE...

Commerce, welcomed the idea for expansion of ties and referring to the ample grounds of cooperation between the two countries called for promotion of bilateral relations in all possible fields.

(Contd. From Pg. 6)

OLDEST......

to fossilized remains in the forest floor carbon-dated at 43,000 years.

A 13,000-year-old huckleberry in the United States was previously thought to be the world's oldest plant and the Arizona bristle pine, at 4,700 years, the oldest tree.

"When people think of a 43,000-year-old plant they probably visualize something gnarled and twisted but this just looks like an undershrub in the forest," Harris said.

Lomatia Tasmanica, which Harris hopes can be propagated and sold to gardeners worldwide, flowers regularly and has the glossy, pointed leaves common to holly varieties.

The temperate-climate plant is a self-propagating clone that reproduces by shedding cuttings of itself onto the forest floor that grow into genetically identical clones.

"It looks like it consists of several hundred individual shrubs but research shows they are all genetically identical - meaning they are essentially the same plant," Harris said.

As one would expect, king's holly is hardy - a cutting taken years ago has survived in a pot at the royal Tasmanian botanical gardens.

(DPA



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Al-Khalil Raid Puts Spotlight on Feared Israeli Undercover Units

BAIT-UL-MOQADDS - The soldiers in Israel's most secret battalion learn Arabic, know how to apply stage makeup, and drill in a movie set-style West Bank village made of plywood.

Their mission: Stalking and snatching Palestinians wanted for violence against Israel.

Undercover soldiers whose lives depend on secrecy came under intense public scrutiny last week when agents mingled with Palestinian stone-throwers in Al-Khalil, even hurled a few rocks, then jumped four of the startled rioters and dragged them away at gunpoint.

The arrests, during which undercover soldiers kicked captured Palestinians lying on the ground, triggered new debate in Israel about the units, created in 1988 during the Palestinian revolt against Israeli occupation.

Human rights groups say undercover units are illegal and operate without the restraints placed on uniformed soldiers. One Israeli group, Betselem, said 161 Palestinians, including 19 under age 16, have died in undercover ambushes.

The West Bank army commander, Maj. Gen. Gabi Ofir, defended the units as crucial to Israel's security, saying they were the "spearhead in the war against terror."

But the soldiers themselves do not appear immune from doubt. A former member of the army undercover unit Duvdevan - the Hebrew word for "cherry" - said he served in an atmosphere in which the lives of targeted Palestinians counted for little, and the most ruthless soldiers were most admired.

"We were all too eager. We didn't take too many chances to keep them alive," said Mark, 27, who spoke on condition his real name not be used.

He said his team, consisting of eight soldiers, once spent a week with an army psychologist to discuss excessive use of force. "They thought we were cracking up," Mark said.

However, Roni Daniel, a military correspondent for Israel TV's channel two who recently spent several days with a Duvdevan unit, said he encountered only serious, level-headed people who had survived an exacting selection process that weeds out 99 of 100 applicants.



"They don't hate the Arabs. They try hard to understand them. But they are dealing with terrorists, and are determined to catch them," Daniel said.

Last week, Daniel showed rare footage from a Duvdevan training exercise in a fake Palestinian village made of plywood facades, with a donkey in a pen and the Muslim call to prayer wailing out of a mosque loudspeaker.

Behind the facade, soldiers changed from their olive uniforms into jeans, shirts and sneakers, and had fake beard stubble applied by a makeup artist.

In the role playing, Palestinians stoned an Israeli army jeep and burned a tire in the village street. Suddenly, two make-believe protesters jumped the ringleader, locked him in a choke hold, hauled him into a white Mercedes and sped away, waving guns from the car window to keep the crowd at bay.

The Duvdevan soldiers are trained for quick surprise raids, not long-term undercover assignments, the reasoning apparently being that Palestinians would quickly spot a non-native speaker.

In basic training, undercover soldiers learn useful phrases in Arabic that will help them conceal their true identity during the few minutes they need to get close to their targets. They also learn how to apply makeup, wigs and beards.

Mark, who is stocky with a light complexion, said he usually was disguised as a Palestinian woman. He would shave, apply foundation and eyeliner and partially veil his face.

He would wear a floor-length traditional robe, roomy enough for hiding a gun. The gown had snaps that Mark could quickly rip open once the chase began and he had to move fast.

The disguises didn't always work. The fake moustache of one of Mark's mates once came unglued while they were mingling with Palestinian stone-throwers. The Palestinians threw stones at the Israelis, who barely escaped.

At the height of the 1987-1993 Palestinian uprising, the undercover units tracked down dozens of wanted Palestinians. After the signing of the peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians in 1993, the street violence ebbed and raids became less frequent.

The Gaza unit, Shimshon, was disbanded after most of the Gaza Strip came under Palestinian control in 1994.

But last week's Al-Khalil raid - carried out by an undercover unit of the paramilitary border police - reminded the Palestinians that the security forces in disguise are still a force to reckon with. In response to the arrests, Palestinian security forces patrolled the streets of Al-Khalil and stopped young men for ID checks to make sure they weren't Israeli agents.

"The special forces are feared more than the soldiers," said Zeedan Sharabati, a 26-year-old resident of the city. "They operate in places where you least expect them, in the mosques, in the streets, and you can't tell them from your next-door. (AP)

Ousted Cambodian Premier Seeks US Backing Against Hun Sen

WASHINGTON— Cambodia's ousted co-premier, prince Norodom Ranariddh, was meeting with US policymakers here Friday to seek support in isolating rival strongman Hun Sen.

But officials and analysts said Ranariddh, ousted last weekend after four years in an awkward coalition with Hun Sen, would get an angry earful for trying to strengthen his own position by cozying up to the Khmer Rouge.

A source close to Ranariddh said the prince would be using Cambodia's royalist-headed UN mission in New York as his base of operations in the United States and bypassing the communist-led embassy in Washington.

"He won't be in touch with them," the source said of the embassy staff here, who are known to support Hun Sen.

The prince was to meet key members of the republican-run Congress through the morning and acting secretary of state Thomas Pickering at midday. He was scheduled to give a news conference in the afternoon.

"My country is a democracy, but it's in great danger," Ranariddh told reporters early Friday on capitol hill.

He voiced satisfaction with the 30-day freeze announced Thursday on this year's 35 million dollars in US aid to Cambodia but said the move was "not enough."

The prince will find support for that view from senator Jesse Helms and representative Ben Gilman, who respectively chair the senate foreign relations committee and house international relations committee.

The two legislators were expected to send a letter to the administration on Friday asking for a firmer us response and a freeze on all aid until democracy is Cambodia is restored.

The Clinton administration has ruled out further penalties for the moment, saying it wanted to try other means of restoring stability first.

While US officials oppose Hun Sen's power-grab, they aren't rushing to embrace the exiled prince. Ranariddh "made a very serious error in his flirtation with the Khmer Rouge," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Thursday.

"There are very few heroes you can identify in Cambodia, because on the one hand you have Hun Sen, who has chosen the path of violence, and the other you have prince Ranariddh, who was toying with a political alliance with the Khmer Rouge," Burns said.

The United States has formally branded the Khmer Rouge, whose years in power from 1975-79 left up to two million Cambodians dead, "genocidal," and it has sanctioned and funded efforts to bring the faction to justice.

"I don't see any enthusiasm in Washington (for) any alliance with the Khmer Rouge," said Rick Fisher, Asia analyst at the conservative heritage foundation here.

"The only approach I imagine the West would be comfortable with would be a resumption of the Paris peace process of the late 1980s," he said.

The Paris peace talks, backed by the permanent five members of the UN Security Council, led to a breakthrough accord in October 1991, followed by a huge peacekeeping operation and UN-sponsored elections in 1993.

When Ranariddh's faction won by a slim majority and needed a coalition partner, his father, King Norodom Sihanouk, forced him to share power with Hun Sen.

Working together since then, Ranariddh said in an interview published Friday in the New York Times, was "a nightmare." (AFP)

India Has Not Abandoned Long-Range Missile Program: Defense Minister

NEW DELHI— Indian defense minister Mulayam Singh Yadav said the government has not abandoned a plan to build a long-range missile.

Singh, in a statement issued here late Friday, said India has not shelved a project to build the ballistic missile called "Agni" (fire), which has been tested successfully several times since 1981.

"There will be no compromise on India's security and the country would not be cowed down," Singh said referring to reports that Pakistan has test-fired a medium-range missile which would be able to reach New Delhi.

Agni, which has a range of 2,500 kilometres (1,500 miles) and can carry a one-ton nuclear warhead, has been launched three times since February 1994 on an experimental basis.

"Further development or flight trial program will be decided by the government based on the threat perception and at an appropriate time," Singh added.

"The country must remain strong as only the weak will be prone to aggressive designs. Any aggression will be met with a befitting reply."

The United States has voiced fears that the Agni could trigger off an arms race in Asia.

Pakistan has also expressed concern about the Agni and has urged India to freeze the missile projects, saying the step would reduce tensions between the two South Asian rivals who have fought three wars since 1947.

Agni caps India's ambitious integrated guided missile development program launched in 1983.

India has developed a surface missile called Prithvi (earth) with a range of 250 kilometres (150 miles), a nine-kilometre (5.4-mile) anti-aircraft missile called "Akash" (sky) and tankbusters called nag (Cobra).

It has already made sea-skimmers called "trishul" (trident) while the navy plans to re-design Prithvi, the Indian version of the Soviet Scuds. (AFP)

Egypt Police Arrest Blind Car Stereo Thief

CAIRO — Egyptian police arrested a blind man who confessed to breaking into cars and stealing their stereos, the Akhbar Al-Youm newspaper said on Saturday.

The newspaper said police nabbed the unnamed man after a car owner saw him driving his vehicle for a few kilometers, quickly pull out the stereo and then walk away.

Investigations showed the man had turned into a professional car stereo thief when he was blinded two years ago as a result of drinking liqor. (Reuter)

Father Decapitates Two Children

HANOI — A Vietnamese father decapitated his two children after a violent argument despite the pleadings of his family, a newspaper reported Saturday.

Truong Van Tien, who had been drinking, used a machete to decapitate his nine-year-old daughter and his eight-year-old son after his wife deserted the family, said the weekly Phu Nu.

The report said the wife, who was frequently beaten, had gone to live with her mother. (AFP)

Cuban Plane Crashes With 44 People Aboard

MEXICO CITY — Cuban ships and planes searched the Caribbean on Saturday for a Cuban airliner that crashed into the water with 44 people aboard, including eight foreigners.

Cubana de Aviacion Flight 787 crashed Friday night about three minutes after takeoff from Santiago de Cuba en route to Havana, airline spokesman Manolo Fernandez told the Associated Press by telephone from Havana.

Fernandez said 39 passengers and a crew of five were on board the Russian-made, twin-engine AN-24 aircraft.

He did not have the nationalities of the foreigners. The Spanish Foreign Ministry said some passengers were from Spain and Brazil, according to EFE, pain's official news agency.

So far, no survivors have been found, the Civil Aviation Institute in Cuba said. It was not clear if the plane itself had been spotted. (AP)



MINSK, Belarus (July 10): Belarussian soldiers dig out mortal remains of German soldiers killed during WWII in the forest near the village of Stanevo, in the region of Minsk, in preparation for the official reburial.Soldiers of the German detachment were taken prisoners by Russian forces after fights near to Stanevo in 1944. After the commander of the Russian unit was killed by a German sniper all prisoners were executed as reprisal, on order by the widow of the killed commander. Due to testimony by a local peasant it was possible to locate the site of the mass grave. (AFP PHOTO)

International Briefs



Strike Paralyzes India's Commercial Capital

BOMBAY — A strike called in protest over Friday's police shooting at a crowd of demonstrators paralyzed life in India's main commercial city Bombay on Saturday, police said.

Italian Police Arrest Leading Mafia Boss

ROME — Police said on Saturday they had arrested fugitive gangster Girolamo Mole, one of Italy's most-wanted Mafia bosses.

Death Toll in Bangladesh Mudslides, Floods Rises to 34

DHAKA — Fresh monsoon rainstorms lashed parts of Bangladesh Saturday as the death toll from four days of landslides and floods reached 34, officials and news reports said.

Officials in the southeastern port city of Chittagong reported 10 more deaths overnight from neighboring Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts, where mudslides and floods earlier left 23 people dead and up to 200,000 others homeless.

Death Toll From Thai Hotel Inferno Rises to 90

PATTAYA, Thailand — The death toll in a hotel inferno in this seaside resort has risen to 90, while some 64 who escaped the blaze were injured, police in Pattaya said Saturday.

More Than 500,000 Protest ETA Kidnapping

BILBAO, Spain — Led by Prime Minister Jose-Maria Aznar, more than 500,000 Spaniards paraded here Saturday in a wave of revulsion against the Basque separatist group ETA which is threatening to murder a political hostage, radio and television said. ETA snatched Miguel Angel Blanco Garrido, 29, on Thursday, and have given until 4:00 p.m. (1400 GMT) Saturday for officials to agree to their demands on political prisoners. If not, they say, they will execute him.

Thai PM Faints in Hot Weather

BANGKOK — Prime Minister Chaowalit Yongchaiyudh fainted on Saturday in the hot weather of Thailand's rural northeast, putting his dizzy spell down to a lack of sleep, reports said.

Clinton Makes First Presidential Visit to Denmark

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — President Bill Clinton, winding up a week in Europe with the first U.S. presidential visit to Denmark, praised Danes Saturday for their role in NATO and dedication to "new hope and new freedom in a new century" for Europe.

Five UN Observers, Interpreter Detained by UNITA

LUANDA, Angola — Five members of the UN observer mission in Angola (Monua) and an interpreter have been detained by rebel UNITA personnel, the UN said Saturday.

Hong Kong Vows to Deport Illegal Immigrant Children

HONG KONG — Hong Kong will continue to deport illegal child immigrants from China despite legal challenges to its policy, the territory's top immigration official said Saturday.

Hun Sen Forces Launch Massive Push as Hundreds Flee Fighting

SIEM REAP, Cambodia — Forces loyal to co-Premier Hun Sen have launched a massive drive in northern Cambodia against troops under ousted first Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh, pushing them back 15 kilometers (nine miles), sources said Saturday.

Locals said hundreds of people fled the fierce artillery and machine gun clashes, amid reports that at least two civilians had been killed in the cross-fire.

Soldiers of Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) also seized a stronghold of a Khmer Rouge faction allied to Prince Ranariddh's Royalist Funcinpec Forces in the district of Angkor Chum, said Western and Cambodian sources returning from the area.

"This is a very important development as it shows the CPP is stronger than Funcinpec in this area and they seem to be winning this battle," one source who had recently returned from the area said.

Another source confirmed the latest offensive had taken recent fighting to a new level.

"It's a very big offensive by the CPP that seems to be working," the source said.

The CPP drive pushed Funcinpec 15 kilometers back from a previous front line, 32 kilometers west of this key northern town, the sources said.

Having seized the formerly Khmer Rouge village of Sasar Sdam in Angkor Chum District northwest of here, Hun Sen's Army drove the Royalist frontlines back to the village of Prey Chruk. (AFP)

Cuba Says Che Guevara's Bones Identified

HAVANA — The Cuban government said early on Saturday that a skeleton unearthed from a Bolivian mass grave a week ago has been identified as the last remains of the legendary guerrilla Ernesto "Che" Guevara.

A government statement published by the ruling Communist Party newspaper *Granma* said Guevara's remains, along with those of three Cuban guerrilla comrades unearthed from the same spot by a team of Latin American experts, would be returned "shortly" to Cuba.

It did not indicate exactly when this might be.

The Argentine-born Guevara, one of Cuba's most revered heroes, was captured and shot in October 1967 while leading a small guerrilla uprising in the jungles of Bolivia.

Guevara, who served as President Fidel Castro's right-hand man during the struggle that brought Castro to power in 1959, became an icon for a generation of leftists around the world. (Reuter)

Town Mourns Death of Drug Lord

EL GUAMUCHILITO, Mexico — Residents in this northern Mexican town mourned openly the death of Amado Carrillo Fuentes, a man they often saw as a benefactor and not the blood-thirsty drug lord police say he was.

Carrillo Fuentes was head of the powerful Juarez Drug Cartel, based in the northern border city of Ciudad Juarez, across from El Paso, Texas.

The man known here in warm terms as "Amadito" died July 4 of a heart attack after undergoing eight hours of liposuction and plastic surgery in Mexico City the day before.

Authorities say Carrillo Fuentes, Mexico's top drug lord, was responsible for scores of deaths in his rise through the ranks of the criminal world.

That didn't stop some 400 people, mainly humble local residents, going by the open casket late Friday in the family farm of Santa Autora for a final farewell.

Indian PM Attacked by Allies, Opposition for Scandal

NEW DELHI — Beleaguered Indian Premier Inder Kumar Gujral Saturday drew flak from his key ally and the main opposition party for an embezzlement scandal rocking his minority government.

Sitaram Kesri, the chief of the Congress (I) Party which keeps the multi-party coalition in power, Saturday told senior party leaders that the ruling United Front Coalition had "weaknesses," the Press Trust of India reported.

Kesri, who had made similar noises earlier this year before suddenly withdrawing support to the Front until it changed its prime minister for Gujral, however, said it was not a prelude to another volte-face by the Congress.

"Our support will continue in spite of the government's weaknesses," he said as senior partymen raised concern over growing insurgency in the troubled states of Kashmir and the northeast and an impending rise in Hindu Nationalists, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) took a harder line on Saturday.

"The fall of the government is imminent as it is like a patient in the intensive care unit," party Chief Lal Krishna Advani said in the northern city of Amritsar. (AFP)

Army Team Called Out to Probe Pakistan Police Station Blast

ISLAMABAD — A team of Pakistan Army investigators was called out Saturday to probe the cause of a powerful explosion at a police station in the Punjab city of Rawalpindi as government officials blamed external forces for acts of terrorism.

The army team was called out by the Rawalpindi administration after the pre-dawn blast [illegible] police personnel injured, officials said.

Minister for Culture Shaikh Rashid Ahmed, told reporters during a visit to the area that "external forces" were involved in terrorist activities to create anarchy in the country.

These forces were engaged in nefarious activities for the [illegible]

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Russia, Chechnya, Azerbaijan Sign Oil Accord

MOSCOW — A long-delayed accord was signed Friday for the shipment of oil from vast reserves in Azerbaijan through war-shattered Chechnya to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, Interfax news agency reported.

The oil pipeline accord, signed in the Azeri capital Baku by Russian, Chechen and Azeri officials, paves the way for developing the Caspian Sea fields, which are forecast to rival those of the Middle East within 10 years.

An international oil consortium, known as AIOC, is to start pumping oil from the Azeri fields in October.

The document was signed by Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, the head of Chechnya's National Oil Company Yunko Kohdzh-Akhmed Yarikhanov, and his counterpart at the Azerbaijan State Oil Company Natik Aliyev.

"Today's agreement in Baku resolves all of the complex problems which had been hindering the implementation of this project, which envisages the transportation of five million tons of oil annually," Nemtsov said.

He credited an "understanding" reached earlier this month by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Azeri President Haydar Aliyev as a major factor in successful completion of the deal.

Earlier, Aliyev had called on Russia and Chechnya to open up the pipeline as soon as possible.

"I'll say frankly that if you do not open this route to us, we have the opportunity to move oil along two other routes: through Georgia to the port of Supsa, and through Turkey to the port of Ceyhan," the president warned.

Nemtsov, who is also Russia's energy minister, and Chechen Negotiators flew straight to Baku after concluding a banking accord in Moscow which had held up the oil deal.

The banking deal gave Chechnya, which considers itself independent and which drove out Russian troops in a devastating 1994-96 war, a correspondent account in Russia's Central Bank, Interfax said.

Chechnya had refused to sign the vital accord on sharing the oil pipeline until it was satisfied with the banking and customs arrangements.

A 150-kilometer (93-mile) section of the pipeline, which is key for exporting oil from Azerbaijan's offshore fields in the Caspian Sea, runs through Chechnya, linking up to Grozny's war-damaged refineries.

In addition to transit fees for the oil, Chechnya has also demanded money to repair damage to the pipeline caused during the war.

Prior to the signing of the agreement, Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin told Interfax that the accord would also clear the way for Chechnya to export its oil from its own high-quality, but small oil fields.

The banking links were expected to open the way for Chechnya to receive Russian aid and for Chechen banks to carry out financial transactions, including those in foreign currency.

Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin told Interfax that this would give Chechnya, where industrial sites and much of the farmland was ruined in the war, "a powerful impulse."

The two sides were also close to signing a customs agreement, which had likewise been the subject of months of tortuous negotiations.

Rybkin said that Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin had signed the agreement and that Moscow now expected Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov's signature later Friday.

ITAR-TASS earlier reported that the agreement had already been signed by both sides.

There were no details on the customs agreement. Chechnya had been demanding that its airport in Grozny have international status.

Russian negotiator Boris Berezovsky, deputy secretary of the Security Council, said the economic accords were "the base for the economic recovery of the Chechen Republic," ITAR-TASS reported.

He added that they "create the foundation for normal relations between the Federal Center and Chechnya."

(AFP)

NAFTA Led to Modest Economic Gains

WASHINGTON — The controversial North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has had a "modest positive effect" on the U.S. economy, the White House said Friday in a report to congress.

The report's restrained language contrasts with White House claims four years ago that NAFTA — encompassing the United States, Canada and Mexico — would energize the economy and create a rush of new jobs that pay high wages.

Opponents have maintained that NAFTA, which went into force January 1, 1994, has cost the United States tens of thousands of jobs because it encourages U.S. businesses to hire cheaper labor in Mexico.

Citing several studies, the Clinton Administration said that NAFTA "had a modest positive effect on U.S. net exports, income, investment and jobs supported by exports."

"The hard facts support that this (NAFTA) has been part of a sound economic strategy ... its potential suggests that benefits will be more substantial as time goes on," said White House economic advisor Gene Sperling.

U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky said Mexico and Canada now account for one-third of total U.S. global trade. She added that if current trends continue, Mexico will surpass Japan this year as the number two U.S. trading partner.

Between 1993 and 1996, U.S. exports to Canada were up 33.6 percent, while exports to Mexico rose 36.5 percent, according to the White House report.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said the adoption of NAFTA has "contributed enormously to the speed of recovery in Mexico."

"NAFTA, by cementing a commitment to lower tariffs, played a substantial role in Mexico choosing the difficult reform path," said Rubin.

He noted that unemployment and inflation levels in Mexico are down, financial stability and foreign capital have returned, while monetary and fiscal policy remain on track.

"The foundation of our economic relationship with Mexico is NAFTA," Rubin said.

Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters Union, scoffed at the administration's conclusions.

"The test of any trade agreement is whether it's good for working families," Carey said in a statement. "You have to close one eye and put your hands over your ears to say that NAFTA has measured up."

Carey said more than 400,000 U.S. jobs have been lost to NAFTA. He urged Congress to reject the Clinton Administration's request for "fast track" authority leading to an expanded NAFTA.

Late last month a powerful Coalition of Labor, Environmental and Policy groups called NAFTA a "failed experiment."

"Although NAFTA clearly has been good for some North Americans, the costs... have been much heavier," said a joint statement from the Economic Policy Institute, the Institute for Policy Studies, the International Labor Rights Fund, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, the Sierra Club and the U.S. Business and Industrial Council Educational Foundation.

Greg Mastel, an economist with the Economic Strategy Institute in Washington, praised the Clinton Administration for issuing a report that does not overstate NAFTA's effect.

At the time Congress approved it, "both sides played (it) as though it was the most important economic issue facing the U.S.," Mastel said. "It simply isn't."

(AFP)

Law and Order Indispensable to Albania Recovery

TIRANA — Albania, dirt-poor after a half century of stalinism and years of rocky economic reform, has no hope of real development unless it restores law and order, politicians and economists said.

Up to a million guns remain spread across the country, many in the hands of criminal gangs, after Albanians took to the streets, looting military state arms depots, to protest at the collapse of popular get-rich-quick savings schemes.

"Restoring public order is the prerequisite for normal business activities," economist Zef Preci from the Independent Albanian Center for Economic Research told Reuters.

"It's difficult to see the future of this country. It's hard to find adequate economic policies to overcome the crisis."

Fatos Nano, leader of the socialists who won a landslide victory against the rightist Democratic Party in elections called on June 29, said public order was the key priority for Albania, Europe's poorest nation, with 3.4 million people.

"We want Albania to become a normal European country," he told reporters, while playing down an earlier, ambitious promise to refund people who lost money in the pyramid schemes.

Nano, a multilingual economist set to become prime minister, stressed in the election campaign that his party, the reformed heirs to Albania's communists, fully supported a market economy, private property and free enterprise.



Preci said Albania's economy was in trouble before this year's crisis, stumbling in its transition to market freedoms after 45 years of Stalinist rule that ended in 1990.

Most of Albania's money has since passed through an informal sector in cash — payments from trafficking drugs, illegal immigrants, and black-market petrol, or remittances from Albanian relatives working overseas, many illegally.

"Albanian economic growth (of 10 percent between 1993-1995) was false. It was not based on reality but on informal sources," Preci said.

The lack of tax and customs collections in the past six months has worsened the situation, with only some 37 percent of income for the budget collected since January.

Instead of the state collecting taxes, Preci said, paramilitary gangs terrorising the country were extorting money from local businesses in protection rackets.

Preci forecast the budget deficit would blow out to about 20 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) this year compared to 11 percent in 1996 and seven percent in 1995, which could send inflation spiralling to up to 70 percent.

GDP was forecast to fall by seven percent this year after rising 5.5 percent in 1996 to $2.3 billion — and according to government estimates, more than half of this was tied up in the popular pyramid funds that flourished, unregulated.

The International Monetary Fund has said Albania needs to reorganize tax collection, increase some tax returns and control expenditure as its first steps towards restructuring and modernizing a widely primitive economy.

"But without law and order, none of this can be done," a Tirana business leader said, requesting anonymity.

Preci said privatizing Albania's oil and mining industries and restoring confidence in the banking system are key steps.

Albanians withdrew their savings from banks last year, opting for the high-paying pyramid funds.

But a spokesman from Albania's savings bank, Llazi balliu, told local media on Tuesday that people were starting to return to banks. The savings bank's deposits have passed 25 billion leks against 19 billion leks at the end of 1996.

Nano said the conclusion of the election, held in relative calm for a country where guns have ruled for months, had already caused a sigh of relief in the business sector.

The local currency, the Lek, has strengthened in recent days, trading at about 170 to the u.s. dollar on Tuesday compared to 177 just three days ago.

"Businessmen are feeling more secure," Nano told the Albanian *Daily News*.

"Our policy's chief goal will be that their investments, savings, profits and everything else will not be devalued as the result of exchange rate movements."

(Reuter)

Peso Plunges After Decision to Allow Wider Trading Range

MANILA, PHILIPPINES — Currency trading was halted Friday after the Philippine Peso plunged more than 11 percent in response to an announcement by the Central Bank that it will allow the peso a wider trading range.

The Central Bank's decision sent stocks surging 7.6 percent in their largest one-day gain on record, traders said.

The Central Bank did not specify the new range for the peso, which plummeted to as low as 29.450 pesos to a dollar from Thursday's 26.40 pesos before trading was halted.

The Malaysian ringgit, Thai baht and the Indonesian rupiah all dropped against the U.S. dollar following the Philippine Central Bank's announcement.

The Central Bank said the new policy for the exchange rate reflects "new market conditions" following a week of heavy attacks by speculators on the peso triggered by Thailand's recent decision to allow its baht to move lower.

The Central Bank had been forced to sell large amounts of dollars and boost its overnight borrowing rate to a towering 32 percent in an effort to protect the peso's value.

Analysts had questioned whether the Central Bank would be able to maintain its defense because of its limited international reserves and the negative impact of high interest rates on economic growth.

Central Bank Governor Gabriel Singson denied that the wider trading range was a devaluation and said the bank remained committed to a market-orientated exchange rate.

"Of course, under current circumstances, this has led to a depreciation of the peso, but we expect this temporary situation to stabilize as markets are invariably self-correcting," he told a news conference.

Singson said a more flexible exchange rate will conserve international reserves and bring interest rates back to levels compatible with the needs of the economy.

He estimated current foreign reserves at $10 billion. That level, according to some estimates, is below the requirement of three months' worth of imports.

Prior to this week, reserves were over $11 billion, close to record levels but considerably lower than many neighboring countries.

The peso has been a highly managed currency. It has moved in an exceptionally tight range against the dollar over the past 18 months, despite bouts of intense volatility.

On the stock market, the 30-share Philippine stock exchange index surged 189.99 points, or 7.6 percent, to 2,701.14 because of expectations of lower interest rates, traders said. The index fell 78.05 points on Thursday.

in Washington, the International Monetary Fund strongly commended the Central Bank's action and offered to help by increasing the funds available to the Philippines for borrowing.

(AP)



More Than 600 Cats and Dogs Found Living in Private Home in U.S.

LOS ANGELES — The discovery of more than 617 diseased, dead and dying cats and dogs in a five-bedroom private home in Los Angeles led to the arrest Monday of the owner on felony charges of animal cruelty.

Doris Romeo, who operated what she called a pets for life sanctuary, also faces charges of improperly caring for animals, no kennel permit, maintaining dogs without a licence and failure to provide rabies vaccinations.

Los Angeles animal services spokesman Peter Persic said, "there were cats that were severely emaciated, animals that had not had access to food or fresh water. There were upper respiratory problems, skin problems and internal and external parasites."

He said nine animals were found dead in shopping bags, closets and under furniture, while dying cats were found atop heating pads inside cat carriers in the sweltering house.

Authorities carted off 589 cats and 28 dogs from the shelter, but 39 severely diseased or dying cats were put to sleep by veterinarians.

(DPA)

Japanese Toy Maker Buys Antique Teddy Bear at German Auction

TOKYO — Japanese toy maker Takara Co. Ltd. has bought a German-made antique teddy bear at auction for about 170,000 marks (96,600 dollars), a company spokesman said Wednesday.

The teddy bear came under the Hammer on July 5 at a southern German village, where a teddy bear festival was held to commemorate the 150th birthday of Margarete Steiff, known as the creator of the stuffed doll, the spokesman said.

The teddy bear, made in 1925 in Germany, is brown and 60 centimeters (24 inches) tall. The auction was organized by German doll manufacturer Steiff, but it was not known who sold it under the Hammer, the spokesman said.

The teddy bear, the prototype of popular teddy clown models, will be displayed at a Tokyo department from July 24, he said.

Takara has the largest market share of dress-up dolls in Japan while it is reputed for producing popular robot toys through Hasbro Bradley in the United States, Canada and Britain.

(AFP)

Parents Praise Daughter Who "Died for S. Africa"

CAPE TOWN — The father of a U.S. student murdered by a mob in a South African township sought on Wednesday to give her killers a moral lesson, urging them to turn the other cheek to apartheid's oppressors.

Peter Biehl and his wife Linda addressed the four black men who murdered their daughter Amy in August 1993 during a hearing at which the four sought amnesty from archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"They told their story to the children, they taught their vows to the children that — we shall never do to them what they did to us," Peter Biehl said in testimony to the commission, quoting a South African poem.

He told a news conference later he had addressed the quote directly to the four killers, trying to look them in the eye. "I think we can all be instructed by that poem...I wanted them to hear those words."

One of the four is a mentally retarded man, who threw the final rocks at Amy Biehl as she lay dying in Guguletu township outside Cape Town.

"I threw many stones at her head from a distance of approximately one meter (yard)," said Vusumzi Ntamo, who acknowledged being incapable of understanding political theory.

Ntamo and the three others are trying to be released from their 18-year jail terms on grounds that the killing was a political act aimed at bringing down the white government.

At the time of the murder, the apartheid government was in the final stages of negotiating itself out of power.

Peter and Linda Biehl told the commission the woman who died in the dust of Guguletu had been a bright, active child who had come to South Africa as a fulbright scholar in a bid to help dispossessed blacks.

They read a passage from a diary she kept at high school: "I'm a very hard worker...as long as I know what I want, I can get it. Getting 90 percent in a chemistry test makes (studying) all night worth it."

Peter Biehl said he and his wife would not oppose the applications for amnesty.

"It's not really a family issue we're dealing with here...this truth and reconciliation process is about a nation," he said.

"We're here to support the process. The elections (in 1994) would never have occurred if this process had not been pre-negotiated. The main thing here is getting the elections and moving the country forward."

The Biehls said they had shaken hands with the youths during the hearing.

Amy Biehl was killed when she drove into Guguletu to drop off black friends who lived there. Her car was stopped by a crowd returning from a political rally and she was stabbed and stoned to death.

The four killers said they had been motivated by the slogan of the radical Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), "one settler, one bullet". The PAC has said the youths were wrong to think party policy was to kill whites at random.

The main issue facing the amnesty committee of the truth commission, which adjourned indefinitely on Wednesday to consider its verdict, is whether the Biehl murder was political or merely racist. Racist crimes do not qualify for amnesty.

The commission was set up in 1995 to investigate human rights abuses by all sides during the apartheid race war, in the belief that revealing as much of the truth as possible would aid reconciliation.

(Reuter)

Ghost-Haunted Attu Island Faces Final Abandonment

ATTU, Alaska — Fifty-four years after the bloody World War II battle of Attu, and centuries after native Aleuts first thrived on this island's bounty from the sea, Attu is on the verge of abandonment.

Its sole remaining occupants — 20 U.S. coast guard crew members and their elderly dog, denizens of an isolated navigational station — may be the last to live on the remote, treeless island, the last in Alaska's 1,400-mile (2,250 km)-long Aleutian chain. It is the westernmost point in the United States — or, some argue, the easternmost since it is on the other side of the international dateline.

The coast guard plans to shut down its Attu Loran station in 2000, when satellite technology will have made the radio signals it beams to distant mariners as obsolete as lighthouses. Left behind along with the ghosts will be traces of the old Aleut village and mounds of rusted wartime debris.

"It's not unlike Gettysburg, Arlington or Antietam. It's hallowed ground," Capt. Mike Haller of the Alaska National Guard said as he hiked through the valley where 549 Americans and all but 29 of the more than 2,400 Japanese soldiers on the island died in a bitter 1943 ground battle. Both sides struggled more against the harsh Aleutian weather and steep volcanic terrain than against each other. American forces eventually ejected the Japanese occupiers from U.S. soil.

Boris Merculief, an Aleut from more northern St. George island whose ancestors may have come from here, was wistful when he reached the site of the traditional village.

'A Perfect Place'

"This is a perfect place. ... It must have been really something," he said after hiking on a rare sunny day to the sheltered cove surrounded by mountains where two memorials to the village stand in the sea grass. It was the first visit to the site by Merculief, a board member of a fund established by congress to compensate the Aleuts for the loss of their villages — including Attu, which U.S. troops torched in the war — and their forced wartime relocation and internment.

A contingent of military officers, Aleuts and Attu war veterans traveled here last month in an effort to keep the memories alive.

The U.S. troops sent to Attu were were ill-equipped to cope with the island's cold, wet weather, spongy terrain and steep, snowcapped peaks, said Jerry Brown, an army historian from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, who led the educational mission. They were trained for fighting in the sahara, he said, but instead of dodging bullets in the desert they coped with frostbite and trenchfoot in the far north.

Some historians say the Americans should have ignored the occupation of Attu, part of an ill-considered Japanese military plan to spread support posts around the Pacific. It would have been better to let the enemy soldiers languish on Attu in isolation until the end of the war, they say.

"They really threatened nothing. The chance of them invading the mainland from here was really ludicrous," John Cloe, historian for Alaska's Elmendorf air force base, said as he hiked the valley where the troops clashed.

Coast guard chief warrant officer Mike Taffe, commander of the Attu station, agrees. "You had 2,400 Japanese guys who couldn't affect anything. But I guess it was the psychological effect of having the Japanese on U.S. soil," he said.

'Why Are We Here?'

Nearing the end of a year-long Attu tour and anticipating reunification with his wife and son and a transfer to balmy mobile, Alabama, Taffe said he cannot understand why the coast guard bothers to maintain its station here either.

A year's duty on the isolated island — one of the few places in the world where howling winds coexist with pea-soup fog — is such a hardship the coast guard counts it as the equivalent of three years at sea on a cutter, Taffe said.

The tedious duty is hard on family life, he said. Two crew members were deserted by their spouses over the past year. "Their wives graciously sent them 'dear john' letters."

Merculief has a more positive impression of rugged Attu, lapped by by the icy bering sea and warmer Pacific ocean. "I just can't understand why the Attuans couldn't come back here. This island is just so beautiful," he said, looking over the old village site.

Attuans were known for their skills at steering kayaks through choppy seas and weaving the island's grass stalks into stunning baskets. According to ancient legend, Attu women were the tallest and most beautiful in the entire Aleutian chain.

Gen. Jake Lestenkof, head of the Alaska National Guard and the great-great grandson of a Russian-Aleut priest from Attu, said he hopes the island's memory will be preserved after the coast guard leaves. Lestenkof was nine years old when the U.S. government forced the Aleuts into crude wartime internment camps away from the battle zone.

Even then, people knew little about Attu, and nothing was taught about it in school, he said. "Maybe now, 50 years later, we're more interested in the past."

(Reuter)

Car Thief Held With Thousands of Keys

NEW DELHI, India — Police in New Delhi have arrested a man with thousands of car keys that he used to steal vehicles and sell them with forged registration papers, newspapers reported Wednesday.

Police arrested Raj Kumar on Monday when they stopped a car on suspicion that it was stolen. They found him with a bag of keys weighing 18 kilograms (40 pounds), newspapers reported.

Police said Kumar - who has earlier served time for stealing 223 cars - carefully checked out vehicles at gas stations and workshops, noting down the key numbers in a diary.

He then tailed vehicles to the owners' homes and calmly opened them with master keys. Sometimes, he abandoned the vehicles if he didn't fancy them, the reports said.

Police also found him carrying rubber stamps of the vehicle registration office.

(AP)

One Million Ravers Expected at Love Parade in Berlin

BERLIN — If predictions prove right, nearly a million young people will be whooping it up in Berlin this weekend when the city's annual mega-rave, the love parade, is staged on the "Strasse Des 17. Juni" boulevard off the Brandenburg gate.

On the record, local government officials are welcoming the event, saying it is good for Berlin's international image, but privately they have expressed concern about the mushrooming size of the event, and are worried lest it spin out of control.

In 1990, when the love parade was held for the second time in Berlin, just 2,000 people participated. In 1994 the figure was 80,000. Two years later in 1996 the number rose to above the 250,000 mark.

This time round as many as 800,000 to a million techno fans are expected to descend on the German capitalfor the love parade, causing municipal authorities to insist the 1997 event be better organized than in the past.

Last year, district council authorities and environmentalists leveled angry complaints after the hordes of techno fans charged through the city's central Tiergarten park in search of toilets, trampling shrubs and bushes.

The mountain of rubbish the mostly young ravers left behind also provoked anger.

Berlin officials have been insisting that the organizers of this year's love parade pay 400,000 marks (about 235,000 dollars) for the clean-up operation afterwards. They have offered to pay 147,000 dollars.

"Let the sun shine in your heart" is the motto adopted by the organizers of the 1997 event.

This peaceful message hasn't registered with militant German leftist extremists known as "Die Autonomen" who have threatened in recent Internet messages to sabotage the Berlin event and turn it into a "hate parade".

Rightwing extremists have also declared war on the event.

In notes relayed to the "*Berliner Zeitung*" newspaper, a group calling itself the "National Action Commando Cottbus" threatened to detonate Soviet-made mines in three places in the Tiergarten Saturday if the love parade goes ahead.

The rightwing extremists also called on Berlin Interior Minister Joerg Schoenbohm to ban the event, claiming the German people's principal interests would be damaged if it was allowed to take place.

Although last year more than 250,000 people showed up for the love parade, the event had little impact trade-wise in Berlin.

Berlin's hoteliers have in the past tended to be dismissive of the love parade, hinting that it rarely brought them additional overnight bookings. Youngsters who didn't have tents slept on benches or slept rough in the parks, it was inferred.

It is a different story this year. "Most of the downtown Berlin hotels are very solidly booked this weekend with love parade participants," according to Heike Wille, a spokeswoman for the city's restaurant and hotel trade.

"The love parade is turning out to be Berlin's summer highlight," she said.

A 40-strong fleet of "technolorries" from a host of European countries will be responsible for pounding out music along Saturday's love parade route.

A first aid organization plans to have 13 tents in the Tiergarten to treat people who faint or are affected by noise or heat.

(DPA)

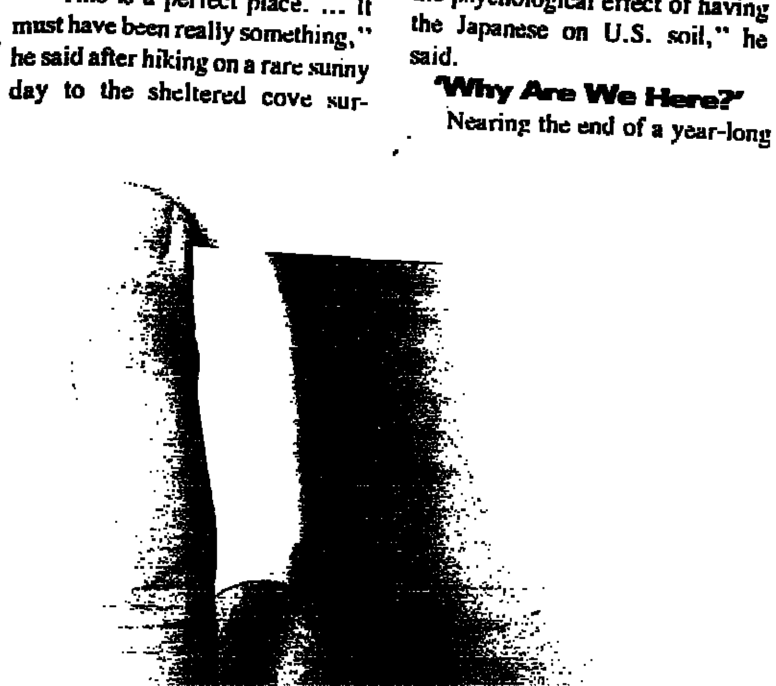
Oldest Living Plant Found in Australia

SYDNEY — A holly bush found in Australia and believed to be the world's oldest living plant may have flowered each spring for the past 43,000 years, Australian news agency AAP reported Wednesday.

Called lomatia tasmanica, or king's holly, the bush was first discovered in a remote part of Tasmania 60 years ago, but botanists have only now established its great age.

Cuttings taken from the plant by Tasmanian parks and wildlife service chief botanist Stephen Harris were found to be identical

(on Pg. 14)





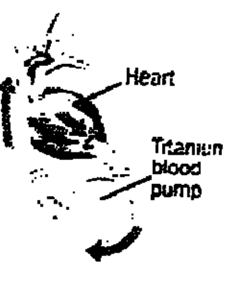
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s Praise Daughter ... Died for S. Africa"

One Million Ravers ... at Love Parade



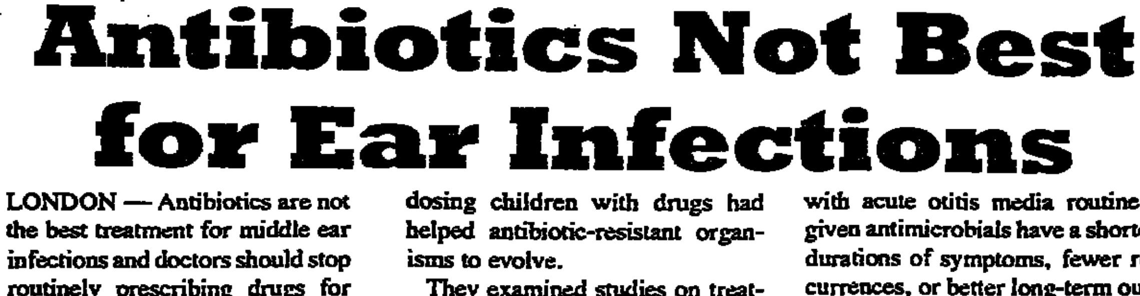








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Antibiotics Not Best for Ear Infections

LONDON — Antibiotics are not the best treatment for middle ear infections and doctors should stop routinely prescribing drugs for them, international experts said on Friday.

Although middle ear infections can be distressing — with a crying, inconsolable child clearly in pain — antibiotics may only do harm, they said.

Larry Culpepper of Boston University and a team of other doctors from the Netherlands, Britain and the United States said needlessly dosing children with drugs had helped antibiotic-resistant organisms to evolve.

They examined studies on treating middle ear infections and concluded that the antibiotics were a waste of time for most children.

"Placebo studies indicate that more than 80 percent of children with acute otitis media (middle ear infection) recover without antimicrobials," they wrote in a paper for the *British Medical Journal*.

"Existing research offers no compelling evidence that children with acute otitis media routinely given antimicrobials have a shorter durations of symptoms, fewer recurrences, or better long-term outcomes than those who do not receive them."

In fact, giving the drugs could be harmful, they said.

"Antimicrobial use in children with otitis media results in the emergence of resistant organisms in those children and in the community," they wrote.

Tests showed children routinely given drugs such as ampicillin tested positive for strains of influenza- and pneumonia-causing microbes resistant to drug therapy.

Despite this, ear infections were the most common reason antibiotics were prescribed to outpatients, and 97 percent of children with ear infections in Britain were prescribed drugs.

Researchers said a better approach would be prevention. Tobacco smoke is a known aggravator of ear infections, and babies who are breast-fed are less prone to them.

Encouraging hand-washing in day-care centers and elsewhere would also help prevent the spread of bugs that cause the infections, they added.

(Reuter)

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

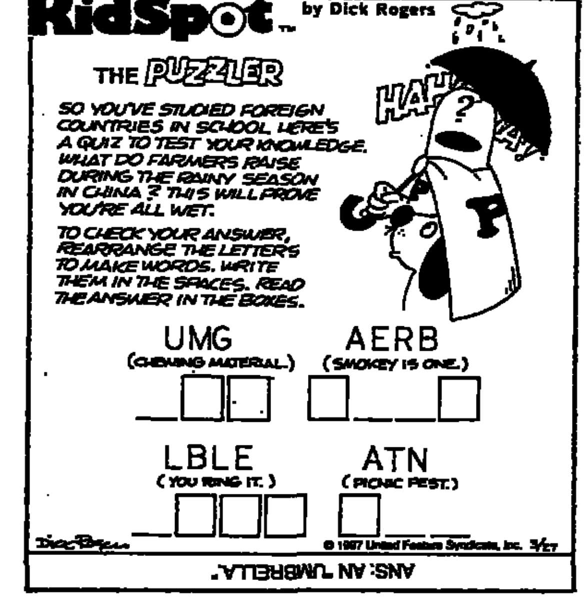
ENGLAND'S King George III's SON WAS ELECTED BISHOP of OSNABRUCK WHEN HE WAS ONLY SEVEN MONTHS OLD!

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RACK 2: R1 N1 T1 E1 O1 E1 G2

RACK 3: N1 A1 C3 N1 O1 O1 Y4

RACK 4: H4 R1 I1 L1 C3 Y4 L1 — 4th Letter Double

PAR SCORE 45-55

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____

TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

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SCRABBLE GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

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O1 P3 E1 R1 A1	RACK 1 = 7
G2 L1 O1 B3 U1 L1 E1	RACK 2 = 70
F4 E1 A1 T1 H4 E1 R1	RACK 3 = 63
B3 R1 O1 A1 D2 L1 Y4	RACK 4 = 89
PAR SCORE 145-155	JUDD'S TOTAL 229

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DENNIS THE MENACE by Hank Ketcham

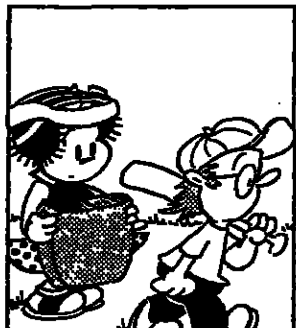
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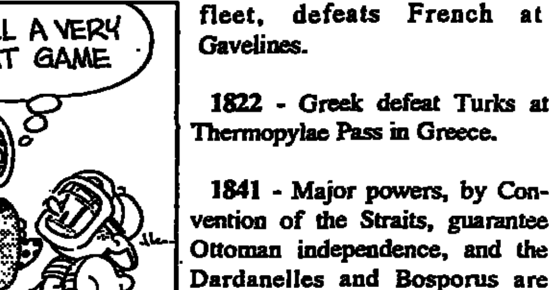
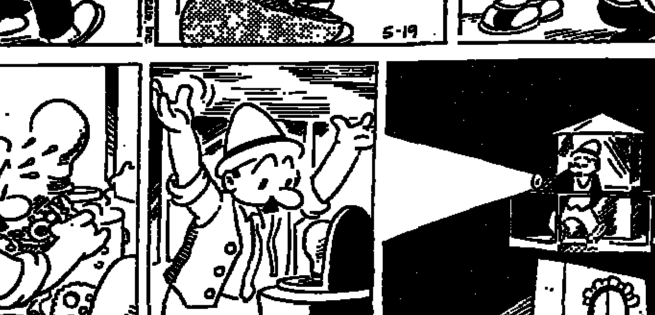


Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.







THOUGHT

Every man alone is sincere; at the entrance of a second person hypocrisy begins.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

PRAYER

Noon 13:10
Evening 20:45
Dawn (tomorrow) 04:12
Sunrise (tomorrow) 05:58

Group Therapy Can Help Unemployed Find Jobs

LONDON — Unemployed workers who took part in group psychotherapy sessions were three times more likely to find jobs than those in counselling groups that concentrated on building social and professional networks, the *Lancet* said Friday.

The British medical weekly carried a report of a study on 289 jobseekers who had been out of work for some two years, having been employed in the fields of management, administration, technical or professional services, or sales.

They were randomly assigned to a program to develop the individual's social and business contacts or one that employed cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), which corrects a distorted view of the world to boost self-confidence.

Out of the 244 people who completed the programs, 34 percent of the CBT participants had found jobs four months later, compared with only 13 percent of those in the social support program.

If part time work was included, the proportions were 48 percent and 28 percent respectively, the *Lancet* said.

The study was carried out by psychologist Dr. Judith Proudfoot and a team at the University of London.

(AFP)

TODAY IN HISTORY

1878 - Russia-Turkish war ends.

1911 - Britain and Japan renew their alliance for four years.

1919 - First dirigible to cross Atlantic Ocean, Britain's 4-34, completes its round trip.

1963 - Chinese accuse United States of trying to poison relations between Peking and Moscow.

1558 - Flemish Army under Duke of Egmont in service of Spain's King Philip II, aided by English fleet, defeats French at Gavelines.

1822 - Greek defeat Turks at Thermopylae Pass in Greece.

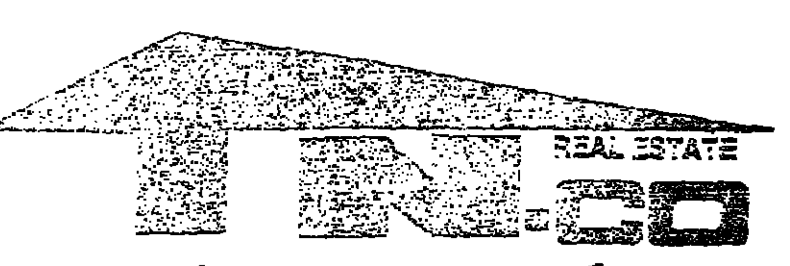
1841 - Major powers, by Convention of the Straits, guarantee Ottoman independence, and the Dardanelles and Bosporus are closed to warshippers of all nations in peacetime.

1854 - Abbas I, viceroy of Egypt, is murdered, and is succeeded by Mohammad Said.

1863 - Rioting against U.S. civil war military conscription breaks out in New York city, and about 1,000 people are killed in three days of disorder.

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NON-IRANIAN FIRMS HAVING AN AGENCY IN IRAN AND LOCAL MANUFACTURERS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TENDER MAY REFER TO THE SECRETARIAT OF PURCHASING & CONTRACTS DEPT. (P&C DEPT.), ROOM 306, BUILDING NO. 5, DR. SHARIATI AVE. WITHIN OFFICE HOURS UP TO SEPT. 4, 1997, RECEIVE A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, DEPOSIT THE AMOUNT OF RLS.50,000 TO TCI'S ACCOUNT NO. 90018 WITH BANK MELLI IRAN, SHARIATI BRANCH AND COLLECT THE TENDER DOCUMENTS. TAKING THE CONTENT INTO CONSIDERATION, THE BIDDERS ARE REQUESTED TO PREPARE THEIR OFFERS IN 3 SEALED ENVELOPES AND HAND IT OVER TO THE SECRETARIAT OF P&C DEPT. AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS LATEST BY 2:00 PM ON SEPT. 6, 1997 (15.6.76 IRANIAN CALENDAR) AGAINST A RECEIPT.

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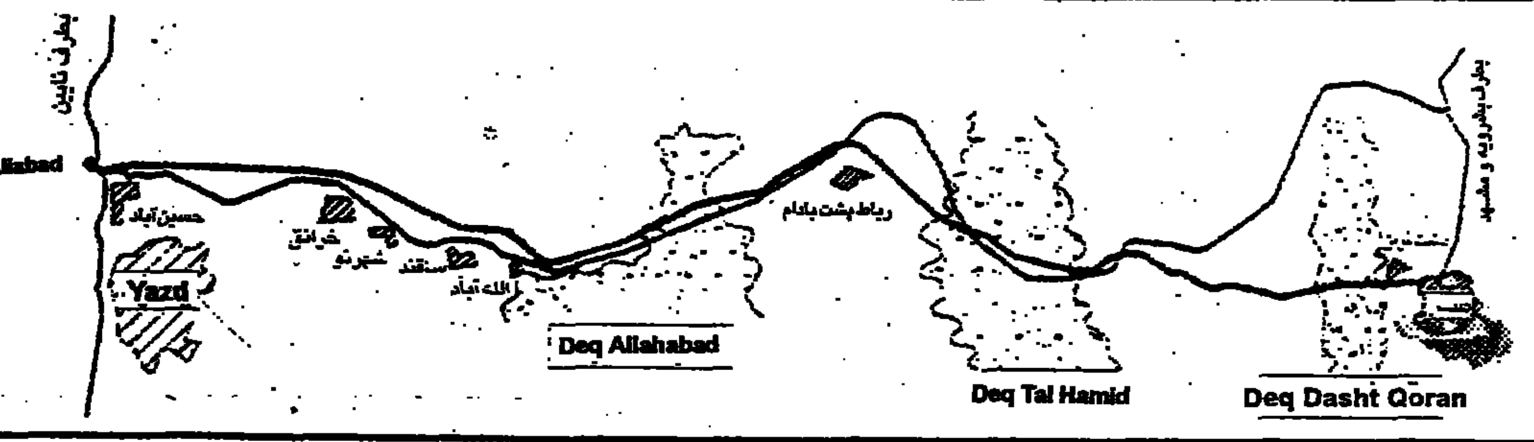
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Construction of Yazd-Tabas Road:

Another Giant Stride Toward Access to and Restoration of Unknown Desert



Mr. Harirforoush, the director general of Road-Construction Office for Western and Central Regions: In addition to providing local access and more facility in transportation between southern and central cities of the country and the holy city of Mashhad, the construction of this road plays a significant role in providing access for the Central Asian countries to the world markets via the Persian Gulf and through Mashhad-Baajgiran road.



The word 'desert' conjures up drought, salty grounds, and thirst. It reminds one of a dry and burning land where no plant but thorn can grow. But have we ever pondered what wealth is lying under this shifting sand?

Desert, the thirsty salt land, embowels the richest mines, so it can be regarded as the richest though the least known region in the country. In this regard, the Ministry of Roads and Transportation has indeed played a significant role in restoring and taking advantage of this mysterious land.

Prior to the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution there was almost no carriage way or asphalted road in the Central Desert and traveling through the desert would be regarded as daring. Link between southern and southeastern regions and Khorassan and northern provinces used to be possible only through Isfahan-Tehran road.

The Ministry of Roads and Transportation, shortly after the victory of the Revolution took some steps to provide transportation in the desert, shorten the traveling distance between the southern and southeastern provinces and the north and northeast of the country, construct a network of roads in desert area in line with the development of the region, and provide access to the mines available in the desert. The steps taken are briefly as follows:

1. Construction of 1,034 km of roads.

2. 676 km of roads is under construction.

3. Construction of 1,240 industrial buildings and the volume of earthwork operations amount to 13,090,000 cubic meters.

4. The investments by the end of 1375 (March 21, 1997) amount to 55 billion rials.

Yazd-Tabas road project covers swamps which once devoured passengers and caravans that lost their way like a dragon. Linking the two inaccessible points of this rich and golden land, i.e. Yazd and Tabas, is another rehabilitating move by the ministry which has brought about increasing prosperity and easier access to the resources of the region. In this regard, Mr. Harirforoush, the director general of Road-Construction Office for Western and Central Regions, said:

Yazd-Tabas Road

Employer: The Ministry of Roads and Transportation, Technical and Road-Construction Deputy, Road-Construction Office of Western and Central Regions.

Planning and Supervision: Iran Sahel Consultant Engineers and Iran Estan Engineers — the jobber of 1,2,3,4 lots.

A. Iran's Roads Development Organization: The jobber of 7,8,9 lots in which most of swampy and impassable areas are located: Simin Sepahan Co.

Yazd-Tabas road is a part of the route between the southwest and northeast of the country. The route extends from Bushehr to Mashhad covering Shiraz, Sormoq, Abarkouh, Yazd, Tabas, Gonabad, and Torbat Heidariyeh.

This road is 1,360 km long, while the present two roads between Bushehr and Mashhad, one via Shiraz, Isfahan, Tehran, Sari, Gorgan, Bojnourd and Qouchan, and the other via Shiraz, Isfahan, Tehran Semnan, Shahroud, Sabzevar and Neishabour are 1,860 km and 1,780 km long respectively. So, the distance between the southwest and the northeast of the country will be 400 km shorter.

The total length of Yazd-Tabas road is about 340 km which is 60 km shorter than the present road.

In addition to providing local access and more facility in transportation between southern and central cities of the country and the holy city of Mashhad, the construction of this road plays a significant role in providing access for the Central Asian countries to the world markets via the Persian Gulf and through Mashhad-Baajgiran road.

As a transit link between the north and the south of the country and the skeleton of the road network of the desert area, Yazd-Tabas road will also have a significant role in the development of the region and access to its mines.

Technical Specifications: The road is 11 meters wide and 340 km long and is constructed in 9 lots. Lots 1,2,3 and a part of lots 4,8,9, have been constructed with a length of 178 km, while lot 7 with a length of 50 km is under construction. As far as the other lots with a length of 112 km are concerned, the present road will be used and they are under construction.

From kilometers 316 + 500 to 331 + 000, Yazd-Tabas road passes through the swamp of "Dasht Qoran" which is in fact the lake of local rivers. The sediment of this level generally consists of silt in addition to organic materials the upper surface of which is dry and pockmarked in the hot and drought season, but in the depth it is still hydrated and miry. In the raining seasons, this level is thoroughly covered with water and its pressure resistance virtually tends toward zero. Because of the constant presence of water on the surface and in the depth of the swamp there is a great danger of capillary attraction and the materials which tend to have this property are strongly vulnerable and gradually sink in mire and silt.

The general principle underlying road construction in these kinds of lands is the fact that the roads is the fact that the roads are floating; hence marine sand which once wet manifests interesting properties has been used.

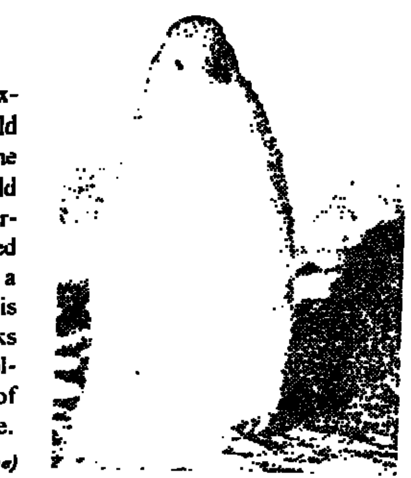
With regard to the peculiar features of "Deq Dasht Qoran" which was explained above, the construction of bridge structures and culverts which are resistant to the frequent settlement of this region involves exceptional designs and heavy expenses that are by no means economical. Hence, the foundations of these structures have been reinforced using suitable designs.

Finally, we hope to construct and develop more roads and facilities in the heart of this region.

Director of Road-Construction Projects: Simin Sepahan Building and Road-Construction Company (LTD.)
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Tel: 278724 Fax: 247644

WHAT'S NEW?

Penguin in White



A penguin in all-white tuxedo? This five-month-old emperor penguin is the first one ever documented. Gerald Kooyman, a university of California, San Diego, scientist, spotted the rare bird while conducting a penguin census in December. This bird is not an albino, which lacks pigment, he says; rather, its coloration is probably the result of recessive genes for white plumage.

(Courtesy Popular Science)

Brazilto Sell Jungle for Sustainable Development





BRASILIA — The Brazilian government will start auctioning off a chunk of Amazon rain forest next week for sustainable development and controlled logging, the country's environmental agency said.

A spokeswoman for the agency, known by its acronym IBAMA, said it would publish on Tuesday rules for bidding to manage 2,471 acres (1,000 hectares) of forest in the northern Amazonian state of Para.

"This is the first time we will have put a piece of Amazonia out to tender," the spokeswoman said.

IBAMA envisages raising about $270,000 with the concession to cut timber in the the National Forest of Tapajos.

Over the next five years, it intends to auction off a total of 12,355 acres (5,000 hectares) of the park, which stretches over 1.48 million acres (600,000 hectares) of Amazon rain forest.

The tender is part of a project backed by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) to encourage sustainable timber felling in Brazilian national parks.

IBAMA has been developing, in conjunction with the world bank, "eco-tourism" infrastructure in the Tapajos Park, which lies near Para's second largest city of Santarem.

The IBAMA spokeswoman said the agency had no clear idea what type of companies might bid for the Tapajos concession, which — due to tough ecological requirements — promised low returns.

Foreign firms were welcome to bid, even the feared Asian logging giants, which have started buying up huge tracts of jungle to the dismay of environmentalists, she said. *(Reuter)*

New Life Blooms in Philippine Town Assailed by Mudflows



BACOLOR, Philippines — Residents of this northern town submerged by rampaging mudflow from a volcanic explosion seethe with anger when told their town has been removed from Philippine maps.

"Why do they say that? You just have to go around and see that it's not true," says Paul Carlos, a member of the mayor's staff who migrated to Bacolor 15 years ago.

Optimism, coupled with the Filipino attitude of "leaving one's fate up to God," inspired many to rebuild on top of the predominantly gray landscape of 20-foot (six-meter) deep caked mud.

They are disregarding experts' warnings that 20 million cubic meters (26.14 million cubic yards) more can still be expected from the Pinatubo volcano's flanks.

The homes are built on stilts 14 feet (four meters) above the ground and face the town church, which has served as Bacolor's rallying point.

"We've already seen the worst. Our town has already been sacrificed to save other towns. What more could happen," says Nilo Caballa, a former town councillor who now volunteers his services to the parish.

Further on the town's border is a new industrial enclave, its foremost trade school bustling students.

A light rain falls, the skies are overcast, but weather officials see an early end to the rainy season, news that is music to residents.

The four years after the 1991 eruption saw Bacolor residents combatting the onslaught of tons of mudflow, which residents say, was aggravated when the government, in 1994, built two dikes — one to hold back the torrent and the other effectively turning the town into a catchbasin.

One dike breached in August 1995, sending first a five to six-foot high wave of mudflow then two months later, as more rain fell, a 25-foot (7.5-meter) high wall of mud that buried the Bacolor village of Cabalantian.



Alejandro de Jesus, a municipal -cooperative development officer.

"We refused to leave (earlier). But in 1995 we had no choice because the lahar (mudflow) was too strong."

But De Jesus and his family returned and after salvaging materials from their old home, proceeded to rebuild with the help of neighbors in 1996.

The residents since then have urged the government to keep the dikes open, saying they can easily cope with average levels of water and mud flowing into the town instead of gigantic mudflows released when the weak dikes crumble.

However, government attention to their town has withered, they say. Caballa says the town budget was slashed by more than half the 1996 figure to 10.5 million pesos ($397,727) in 1997.

"The reasoning of the (national) government is that there are (fewer) people because people have left," he says.

But the population of the town proper has slowly increased to 13,938, from 10,000 in 1995, municipal officials say.

Residents attribute the rebirth of Bacolor, which has a place in Philippine history as the country's capital for two years between 1762 and 1764, to the Roman Catholic parish Priest Nestor Tayag, who rallied the town.

"If it wasn't for father, the town would've died," Caballa says, adding Tayag refused to concede Bacolor was dead and revived the town's celebrations of Sunday masses and the feasts of its patron saints.

Tayag acts as the town's watchman, monitoring radio and disaster relief officials' reports on probable mudflows.

At the Malpitic resettlement area, Aida David and her children sit in the garage of their cement and hollow block home eating their meagre lunch of rice and fish.

"It was hard at first when we had to move here in 1994 because there was no electricity and water. But now it's okay," she said. *(AFP)*

Mars Pathfinder Opens Door to Manned Exploration Missions

PASADENA, California — The wealth of data gathered by the Mars pathfinder opens the door to exploration of the red planet by man early next century, a NASA official said here.

Norm Haynes, director of the Mars Exploration Directorate at NASA's jet propulsion laboratories here, said manned exploration of Mars could come "probably in the second decade of the next century."

Haynes reiterated that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration has set 2014 as the year it will put a man on Mars.

He said the pathfinder probe, which landed on Mars July 4, successfully pioneered a landing technique using air bags that can be deployed on even the roughest terrain.

Pathfinder and the rover robot called sojourner have been transmitting back to earth a stream of photos, climate readings and rock measurements.

"We expect we will learn a lot about the environment" from their data, said Haynes, noting that the scientific instruments of pathfinder and sojourner are vastly more sophisticated than those of the two Viking landers that arrived on Mars in 1976.

Between now and 2005, when samples of Martian rock will be brought back to earth, NASA has a series of Mars missions scheduled. The next is Mars global surveyor, currently on its way to the red planet and due to begin photographing Mars from orbit in September.

In about a year, Mars surveyor '98 orbiter will be launched into orbit to investigate Mars' atmosphere, followed a month later by Mars surveyor '98 lander, which will probe Mars for evidence of water.

"We need to go to places where erosion has been active," geologist Larry Soderblom said.

Soderblom said Mars global surveyor '98 should go north of the Ares Vallis, where Mars pathfinder is set down, to explore areas where the rock is deeply eroded by the wind.

Two Mars surveyor 2001 probes — one orbiting the planet, the other landing — are planned to probe the possibility of extracting from Mars' atmosphere the ingredients for a fuel that would send a manned rocket back to earth, Hayned said.

NASA must also select two good sites where rock samples can be collected in 2001 and 2003.

The surveyor 2001 that lands on Mars will have a robot capable of travelling dozens of kilometers (miles) which will pick up rock samples.

"We have demonstrated that a rover vehicle could work," Haynes said.

In 2003, two other probes will be launched with the same mission of collecting rock samples.

In 2005, a probe will be sent to pick up the amassed samples and return them to earth. Without study of Martian rock, scientists note, it is impossible to say whether there is life on Mars.

But already, Soderblom pointed out, pathfinder has confirmed that the red planet is "a dry, cold, windy desert" with a "complex geologic history" built on volcanic craters and meteorite crash sites, torrential floods billions of years ago and, more recently, wind erosion. *(AFP)*

Apple Computer Chairman Gil Amelio Resigns

CUPERTINO, California — The troubled computer maker Apple Computer Inc. announced that Gilbert F. Amelio has resigned his positions as chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

The company said it is initiating a search for a new chief executive.

Until a new CEO is found, Fred Anderson, executive vice president and chief financial officer, will assume additional responsibilities for the firm's day-to-day operations.

During the interim period, Apple's Cofounder and Strategic Advisor Steve Jobs will assume an expanded role as a key advisor to Apple's board and executive management team. Jobs will also participate in a search committee for the new CEO.

Apple's stock has fallen to its lowest level in recent weeks. The stock closed at $13 11/16 on Wednesday, down $1/16. *(DPA)*





هكذا من الأصل

EXTREME POVERTY COULD BE BANISHED FROM GLOBE EARLY NEXT CENTURY

Given the unprecedented progress in human and economic development over the past 50 years, authors of a new report argue that eradicating extreme poverty in the first one or two decades of the 21st century is a feasible, affordable goal. But to achieve this goal, they warn, strategies are needed to: a) accelerate economic growth in the 100 countries caught in stagnation or decline; b) implement policies that are "pro-poor" or targeted at poverty reduction; and c) reverse the menacing setbacks that create and recreate poverty, including HIV/AIDS, violent conflict and environmental degradation.

According to the just-released Human Development Report 1997, an independent report commissioned by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), much of the world's population has benefited from major advances in economic opportunity and human well-being. For the developing world, these gains have covered as much distance in the past 30 years as the industrialized world did in a century. More than three-fourths of the population can expect to survive to age 40. Adult illiteracy has been reduced by nearly half. Infant mortality has been cut nearly three-fifths.

But this progress must be put in perspective, the report says. Nearly a third of the developing world's population — about 1.3 billion people — live on less than US$1 a day. More than 800 million people do not get enough to eat. Nor has the progress been equally distributed — with some regions too often lagging behind others. Thus, Sub-Saharan Africa's life expectancy at 50 years is 19 years less than the life expectancy achieved in East Asia.

The Human Development Report 1997 is the eighth in a series of annual reports commissioned by UNDP, and prepared through a collaborative effort of a panel of eminent scholars and the UNDP Human Development Report team, under the guidance of Richard Jolly, Special Adviser to the UNDP Administrator and the principal coordinator of the report.

"The dramatic record of poverty reduction in the 20th century shows that we should raise our sights, not downsize our vision for human development," says Jolly. "Extreme poverty could be banished from the globe within one or two decades. A score of countries are on track to do this, including some of the largest — like China — and some of the most dynamic — like Chile, Malaysia, Mauritius and the Republic of Korea."

This year's report focuses sharply on poverty. It provides an extensive overview of global poverty trends; an assessment of the scale of today's poverty problems worldwide; six priorities for tackling poverty at the country level; and a global agenda for supportive action.

AS in previous reports, the 1997 report presents a "Human Development Index," or HDI, that ranks countries according to a composite index of life expectancy, educational attainment and a decent standard of living. This year's report also introduces a special "Human Poverty Index" (HPI), a country-by-country measure of poverty from the human perspective based on three variables: vulnerability of death at an early age; illiteracy; and a less-than-decent standard of living comprised of a lack of access to health services, safe water and adequate food. This measure departs from the conventional measures which are based on income only.

Based on their assessment of the rapid reductions in both income and human poverty throughout much of the developing world, the report's authors maintain that the eradication of extreme poverty is doable:

* Income poverty rates for roughly half the developing world have been reduced by 25 percent or more in just two decades. China, and another 14 countries with populations that add up to more than 1.6 billion people, have halved the proportion of their people in income poverty in less than 20 years. India, and 10 more countries with almost another billion people, have brought down the proportion of their people in income poverty by a quarter or more.

* Human poverty rates have been reduced in well over 100 developing countries, and key indicators of human development have advanced strongly over the past few decades. Since 1960, in little more than a generation, child death rates in developing countries have been more than halved. Life expectancy has increased by more than a third. Malnutrition rates have declined by almost a third. The proportion of children in primary school has risen from less than half to more than three-quarters. And the share of rural families with access to safe water has risen from barely a tenth to about three-quarters.

* In all, by the end of the 20th century some three to four billion of the world's total population of 5.7 billion will have experienced substantial improvements in their standard of living, and about four to five billion will have access to basic education and health.

The report points out two major qualifications. First, not everyone has benefited. The degree of advance has differed widely among groups, countries and regions. Women and children are particularly affected by poverty. Not only do women make a smaller income than men, but they are more constrained by their reproductive and household responsibilities, and they have less access to land, credit and employment opportunities that can help them and their children to escape poverty. Secondly, many of the poorest and least developed countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere have gained much less than the developing countries as a group.

(To be Contd.)

UN Gives OAU Three Million Dollars for Conflict Mechanism



ADDIS ABABA - The UN Development Program Friday announced a three million dollar grant to the Organization of African Unity to help the pan-African body prevent and resolve conflicts.

Documents were signed at OAU headquarters here by UNDP Administrator J.G. Speth and OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim, the OAU announced.

The money will be used for preventive diplomacy, the generation of better information on conflict situations and the training of civilian societies on conflict prevention, it said.

It will also go toward establishing an early warning system, seminars, and training of OAU staff.

Salim met on Thursday with a Togolese delegation headed by Prime Minister Kwassi Klutse, the OAU said.

They underlined the need to deploy an inter-African force in Brazzaville under UN auspices, and said constitutional order should also be restored to Sierra Leone.

(AFP)

Despite Hardships, Angolans Return Home



CAZOMBO, Angola — A cluster of some 40 people rest in the shade of a mango tree amid sacks of donated maize waiting to be called forward to collect some food for the coming week — a typical refugee scene in Africa.

Two months ago most of these Angolans were tilling their own plots of land across the border in neighboring Zambia.

There the children received a solid education, had access to a decent health care and benefited from robust trading that flourished in the refugee camp at Meheba in western Zambia.

Now they have returned home, and life has become tough again. They depend on donated food from international aid groups, and the education and health infrastructure was wrecked by two decades of civil war.

But most are determined to rebuild their lives, because they have come home.

"Our life was good in Meheba," said Jose Silva Panji, 27, who left Angola when he was six years old and returned last year.

"In many ways we were better off. We had a great education, food and health care, but I am Angolan. This is my country, I want to make my life here."

UNITA control said to hinder repatriation

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), one of three aid organizations working in the area, says about 10,000 Angolans have returned to this far eastern part of the country so far this year.

About 4,000 returned during the same period a year ago.

Most of them left their motherland when civil war broke out between UNITA rebels and the MPLA government on independence from Portugal in 1975. Others left when a peace accord between the two sides fell apart in 1992.

A tenuous peace has existed between UNITA and the Luanda authorities since 1994 and the former rebels have entered a power-sharing agreement with the government; but UNITA still controls huge areas of the countryside.

UNHCR officials say this hinders the repatriation of the remaining 20,000 refugees in Meheba and other camps in Zambia.

Those who have come home have done so on their own initiative and an organized repatriation effort will have to wait.

Evidence of UNITA's control is obvious in Cazombo and refugees returning to the area sometimes harbor resentment.

Part of the friction is ethnic. Most of the people in the area are from the Luvale ethnic group, while UNITA draws most of its numbers from Ovimbundu people of Angola's distant central highlands.

"You see, the problem is we are all Luvale peoples," said one recently returned refugee. "Those people, (UNITA)...are Ovimbundu. They tell us to behave a certain way, and to do certain things. What can we do, but do what they say?"

Most of the refugees say they are happy to be back in Angola. This part of the country is in the fertile Zambezi River valley and easily supports corn, bananas, mangos and the staple manioc.

"We have a lot of hardships here," said one 33-year-old woman, who returned from Zambia in April with her six children.

"But we are confident life will get better. This is my country and I feel now that the war is over we can start planning for the future."

Fighting in northeast causes concern

There is a lot of discussion about Angola's fitful peace process and each night the refugees listen to international radio broadcasts for any word on progress in reaching long-term peace.

Many of those who came back from Meheba camp decided to return after hearing reports in April of the formation of the unity government.

But news From Aangola these days is about fighting between the government and UNITA troops in the northeastern diamond fields. That has slowed the flow of refugees, and some who have returned are wondering if they might have come back too soon.

"I have heard disturbing news here lately," said Abraham Casoka, 30, who left Angola in 1976 and returned last year.

"I grew up in Zambia, I am not used to these kinds of disturbing things. The political situation is very difficult here. People in Meheba are just interested in peace, but the people here seem to want to go back to war. Now I am thinking of going back to Zambia."

(Reuter)

Britain Reviews Fairness of Asylum Policy

LONDON - Britain wants to be fairer and faster in granting asylum to refugees and is reviewing immigration policy, the new Labour government said Thursday.

There were "A lot of problems" with current procedures, said Immigration Minister Mike o'Brien, welcoming a report by three civil liberties groups that criticized existing policy.

They said officials operate in a culture that aims to prevent refugees arriving in Britain rather than providing protection from persecution.

The immigration system operated on a "guilty until proven innocent" basis, said the report by the Asylum Rights Campaign Justice, the Immigration Law Practitioners Association and justice decisions were often made too quickly, and were then subject to a two-tier appeals process, which led to a massive backlog of cases stretching back more than four years, the report said.

O'Brian told BBC radio the government was looking at ways to cut the backlog of 50,000 cases awaiting a decision - about 12,000 of which date from before 1993.

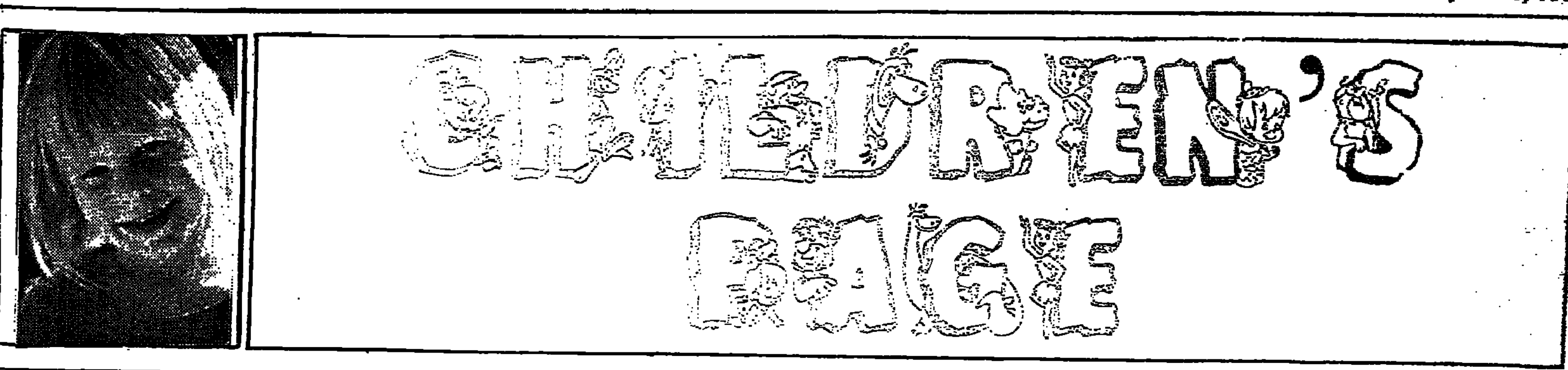
"The new government is looking critically at all aspects of immigration and asylum law and the procedures to ensure decisions are swift and fair," he said.

But it was very difficult to distinguish between bogus and genuine refugees, he stressed.

"There is a need to be both providing protection for genuine asylum-seekers and to stop the abuse. Getting the balance right is very important," he said.

"What we want to do is to make sure we get the procedures streamlined. The policy changes that we want to undertake are to make things fairer, faster and firmer," he said.

(AP)



Mother Squirrel's Day

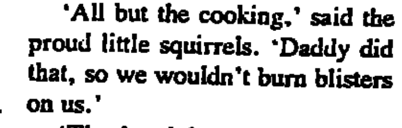
One morning Mother Squirrel went to wake her children. But oh my, all five little squirrels were already up, and all five little beds were made! There were five pairs of slippers standing at the foot of each bed and five cheerful teddy bears stood guard over five pairs of neatly folded pyjamas, while on the door hung five dressing-gowns.

So she hurried in to see that her children washed their faces and paws. But all five little washcloths had already been and all were hung up to dry. Five toothbrushes — red, yellow, green, blue and white — stood in a rack.

'My, my!' the surprised Mother Squirrel cried. She skipped down the stairs to get breakfast ready — and everything was already ready, piping hot on the stove. And there was a nosegay of primroses at her place.

Now, with Mother Squirrel too surprised and delighted to say one word, out of the pantry ran five, smiling little squirrels, with their paws out for hugging. Their mother hugged them all, and asked if they'd done all this themselves.





'All but the cooking,' said the proud little squirrels. 'Daddy did that, so we wouldn't burn blisters on us.'

'That's right,' smiled their daddy, coming in. 'I did that, because it wouldn't do to have blisters on Mother's Day, now would it?'

'No, it wouldn't,' said Mother Squirrel.

'No indeed,' agreed her children. And no one of them even mentioned the blister on the inside of their daddy's paw. But since they'd put ointment on it, and since it had stopped hurting — it wasn't a thing that Mother Squirrel had to know right then, was it?

Why Do Moths Eat Your Clothes?

Actually, moths don't eat your clothes. Certain moth caterpillars eat them. Clothes are their food. They especially like wool and fur. These caterpillars get into your closet or drawer if a female moth lays her eggs there. When the eggs hatch, the hungry little caterpillars come out and go to work on your clothes.

[illegible]



[illegible]ohammad Moosavi
Grade [illegible]
[illegible]
Elementary School



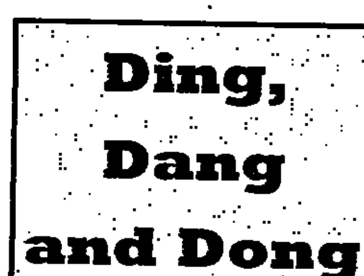
Shahab
Abdolhosseinzadeh
Grade [illegible]
Fatrat Elementary School



Farzaneh Nikookar
Grade 5
Maad Elementary
School
Region 6
Teacher: Mrs. Ahmadi



Marissa Francisco
Farahbod
Grade 3
Maad Elementary
School
Region 6
Teacher: Mrs. Razavi



Ding, Dang and Dong

Once upon a time there were three monkeys called Ding, dang and Dong. And they all lived together in a banana tree. They had bananas for breakfast; and bananas for lunch, bananas for dinner and sometimes if they were hungry they would have bananas for supper.

One day Ding woke up early. It was his turn to get breakfast. He searched the trees but he couldn't find any bananas. There were no bananas left. Not one. The three monkeys had eaten them all.

Ding hurried back to wake up Dang and Dong. "Dong" he cried. "There aren't any bananas left" We have eaten them all."

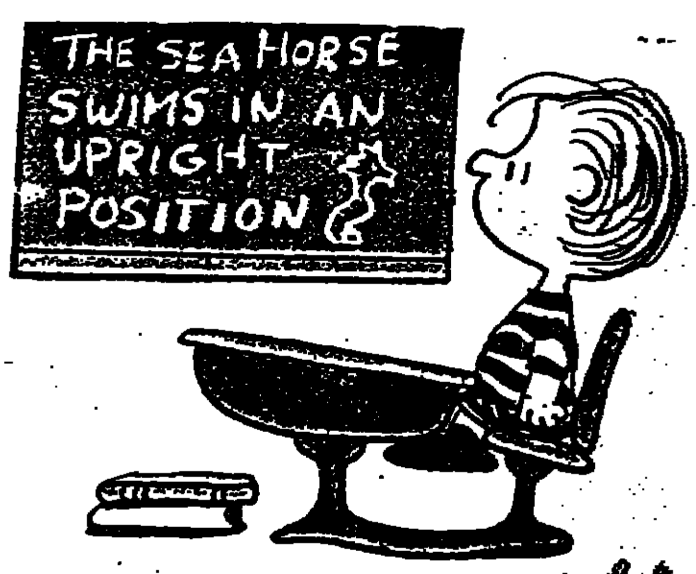
"What" said Dang. Dang jumped up and shook Dong. Dong said, "we must find another tree." So the three monkeys climbed down from the empty banana tree.

They set off through the jungle. Suddenly Grrrrrhhhhhh! A lion sprang out. "Ah!" said the lion "Monkeys! Just what I want for breakfast." The three monkeys stopped and said "you can't eat us." And they ran until they saw a tall tree. Up they leapt. They sat on it. The lion waited for them to come down. But they did not come. At last the lion went away.

Whay hadn't the three monkeys come down? Because they were on a banana tree!



Is a Sea Horse a Fish?



Yes, a sea horse is a fish, even though it doesn't look much like one. Except for its head, it doesn't look much like a horse either. sea horse doesn't move the way most fish do. It swims in an upright position, with its head up and its tail pointing down. The one fin on its back moves very quickly and pushes the sea horse along in the water.

Baby sea horses hatch inside a pocket on their father's belly!

SCRAMBLE

CAN YOU MAKE FOUR FOUR-LETTER WORDS FROM THE SCRAMBLED LETTERS? USE ALL FOUR LETTERS FOR EACH NEW WORD.

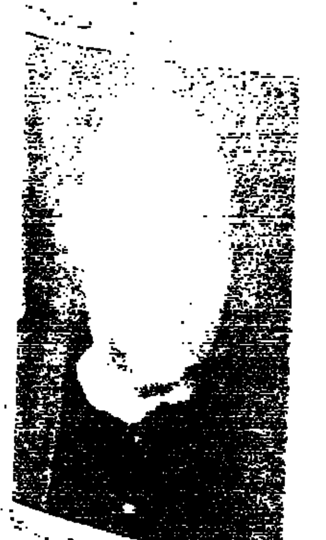
E N M A

1. ______
2. ______
3. ______
4. ______

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ANSWERS: MEAN, NAME, MANE, AMEN.

Sahil
Class I
Indian School



Did You Know That ....

- During your lifetime, your brain may store up to 100 million bits of information!
- The normal human eye can tell apart abouts seven million different shades of color!
- When honeybees dance in the air, it's not just for fun. They are really letting other bees from their hive know where to find food. Fellow workers watch the honeybee dance and are able to get directions that will lead them to the exact location of pollen and nectar.
- The longest frog jump on record is 17 feet and 4 inches.
- A Toad eats about 100 insects everyday.

What is Success?

My mother says,
"Success is a combination of inspiration and perspiration."
I do not understood a word of it.
My father says,
"Success is the result of devotion and dedication."
This also goes over my head.
My brother says,
"Success is possible with concentration and determination."
I am at a loss once again
For me, "Success is passing the examination."

